



The Life of St. Lutgarde
Thomas de Cantimpré

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VITA SANCTAE LVTGARDIS

Latin Text with English Translation

by Mark Reynolds

FAYETTEVILLE

MMXXIII

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This is a new translation of the *Life of St. Lutgarde*, a Cistercian nun and mystic from the bishopric of Liège, now part of Belgium. It was written shortly after her death in 1246 by her close friend, the Dominican preacher and theologian Thomas de Cantimpré. Early in life she received a series of startling visions and revelations, informing her of the special role that God had ordained for her. She found herself able to communicate with Christ in an intimate way, and his continual message was that she was to devote herself to prayer and penance, for the conversion of sinners and the deliverance of souls from purgatory. Lutgarde's saintliness and the power of her prayer quickly became known throughout the region, and in spite of being a cloistered nun devoted to a contemplative life, she acquired considerable celebrity. She was close friends with many prominent religious figures, like Cardinal Jacques de Vitry and Brother Jordan of Saxony, the head of the Dominican Order. She also served as a compassionate adviser and tenacious intercessor for the many visitors who came to the convent at Aywières seeking her aid and comfort.

Lutgarde was fortunate in her biographer. Thomas de Cantimpré is a bright and lively storyteller with a keen feel for the dramatic. As in his earlier *Life of Christina the Astonishing*, he relates the story as a series of short and telling episodes, at times creating an effect similar to a film montage. Thomas Merton, in his study of Lutgarde titled *What Are These Wounds?*, calls Thomas's work "a minor masterpiece. . . . fresh and full of life. Every page furnishes us with vivid little details that stamp his whole record of the saint's life with authenticity."

The Latin text is based on *De S. Virgine Lutgarde* edited by Godfrey Henschen and published in *Acta Sanctorum*, Junii Tomus IV, 1867, 187-210.

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The Life of St. Lutgarde

Thomas de Cantimpré O.P.

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Prologue

To the reverend and most beloved in Christ Dame Hawide, by divine consent Abbess of Aywières,¹ and to all her holy community, I, a brother in the office of subprior but the least of the Brothers Preachers, send greetings.

I have declared in the salutation my office and my order but not my name. This was so that the following work might gain some prestige from my office and order, and not be degraded by the inclusion of my name. The affection I have for not only your community but many other monasteries as well, and the fervent and very special love which I bore for the woman personally, have impelled me to describe the life of the pious Lutgarde. I have divided the work into three books, corresponding to the three states of the soul: the state of those who are beginning, those who are progressing, and those who are perfected. In the first book I describe how Lutgarde began her conversion to sanctity in the Order of St. Benedict, and in the second how she progressed when passing into the Cistercian Order. The third book will deal with the stage of perfection and describe the works that God chose to perform through her in the final eleven years of her life and at the time of her death and after.

I believe, moreover, that it has been many years since a life has been written that contains so many remarkable signs of divine power and so many exceptional miracles. And if I should be asked how I might persuade my readers of the truth of all I have written, I will briefly say – and may Christ himself be my judge and witness – that most of these things I heard from the mouth of Lutgarde herself, as I was her very close friend, and I believe there is no one so rash as to contradict her testimony in these matters. The rest of the material I affirm I have received from people of the sort who never stray in the slightest from the path of truth. I have even refrained from writing of many events, and wondrous ones too, either because they would not be understood by the ignorant or because I found the testimony insufficient.

¹ Aywières is pronounced something like (ay-vee-air)

Since, therefore, *charity believeth all things and bearest all things*,¹ I ask those in whom God has instilled the spirit of his charity to believe these things, if any have been set forth that are sacred, that are useful, that are consonant with the truth; and at the same time I ask them to bear patiently if my writing is sometimes clumsy or incorrect or unlearned. As the glorious Augustine said: *It is a clear sign of an intelligent mind to love the truth in words, not the words themselves*.² Nor indeed is gold less precious because it is dug from the earth, nor wine less savory for being produced from vile wood. Therefore I hope that not only your own community but all the congregations of virgins in the monasteries of Brabant will receive this *Life of Pious Lutgarde*, so that what was well known to all through the fame of her virtue, might be known more fully through the addition of this little book, and that its readers might grow in merit and virtue, who will have at hand in writing an exemplary model of virtue.

I bid farewell to your sincere and holy kindness. Be mindful of me in your prayers and may the goodness of God protect you. Amen.

Book I

On her birth and infancy.

1.1 The pious virgin Lutgarde was born in the once famous city of Tongeren to a noble mother and a burgher father. The father, having a most tender love for his daughter and wanting her to prosper according to the pride of the world, when she was still a small infant entrusted to a certain merchant twenty marks of silver, so that as she grew older and the money increased his daughter might have a larger dowry when she was wed. Moreover, as the girl grew older and learned of what was being done for her, she too, to the degree that a child is able, was eager for marriage. But the good Lord, prescient of the future, who *callest into being those things that are not*,³ frustrated the plans of the father and arranged for Lutgarde to be betrothed to himself. For the trader who was to increase the sum entrusted to him, making frequent crossings to England, lost the money through various mishaps, so that the twenty marks were completely reduced to a single mark.

Nor would this have deterred the determined father or the brash daughter from their purpose, had not the persistence of the pious mother put an end to her daughter's designs by a mixture of threats and blandishments. For the mother stressed to her again and again: "If you wish to wed Christ, I will procure for you an honorable monastery in whatever place you choose. If, however, you want a mortal husband, you will have none

¹ 1 Corinthians 13:7

² Augustine, *On Christian Doctrine* 4.11.26

³ Romans 4:17

but a cowherd.” By such words as these that excellent woman turned the hopes of her husband and the wishes of her daughter to a better purpose.

For as long as Lutgarde lived with her father she was indeed arrayed in fine clothing, but at the same time she shunned indecent jokes and amorous talk and all girlish foolery; and in a remarkable way, when she did not yet know the Lord (for he had not then been revealed to her in any way), yet in her heart, when she was alone, she felt something of the divine within her. And in truth, from that time forward the Lord was preparing in Lutgarde a temple most worthy of his habitation. So then with divine grace, the mother’s influence prevailed with the daughter, and when she was somewhat beyond twelve years of age, in the monastery of St. Catherine near the town of St. Trond in Hesbaye, among nuns of the Order of St. Benedict, she was devoted to the service of God.

How she was wooed by a certain young man, and how through a vision of Christ she was suddenly liberated and completely converted.

1.2 A young man of wealth and high birth began to woo her, and at times she began to feel herself swayed somewhat by his words. Looking for a favorable place and time, in the secrecy of night the young man attempted to approach the house in which the virgin was lying. As soon as he had come to the house, however, he was seized by a sudden fear and ran away. The devil then tried by fantastical means to sway the girl’s susceptible young mind to consent to him, but in vain, for the Almighty did not allow it. And once when the innocent girl was sitting talking to the youth, Christ appeared to her in his human form, looking as he did when he lived among men. Drawing back the garment which covered his breast, he revealed to her the wound in his side, stained, it seemed, with fresh blood, and said to her: “Seek no further the enticements of this ill-suited affection. Contemplate here, forever, what you should love and why. Here I promise you delights of utter purity.”

How a certain devout and noble matron foretold that she would be a second Agnes.

1.3 So then frightened by such an oracle, she straightway clung to the vision with the eyes of her heart, seeking to comprehend what she had seen. And like a dove meditating at a window as the sunlight comes in, she contemplated with steadfast gaze the crystalline door of the Ark, which is a symbol of the body of Christ. Soon the flower of flesh was eaten away, her face grew pale, like every lover’s, and lit up within by a heavenly brightness, she felt that the fog of all vanity had departed her.

One day a noble and devout matron saw her, and moved by the spirit of prophecy she said: “I see in you good Agnes, and truly you shall be a second Agnes.” Immediately after this the young man came to see her and began repeating his proposals. To whom Lutgarde responded as did blessed Agnes once to a suitor, shouting: *Depart from me, fodder of death and nourishment of sin! For I have been claimed by another lover.*¹

¹ The quote is taken from the *Life of St. Agnes* attributed to St. Ambrose.

How a certain knight wooed her, and how she manfully resisted him, and humiliated him.

1.4 Though Lutgarde was now more purely devoted to God, yet another young man, a knight vigorous in arms, fell deeply in love with her. He pursued her for a number of years against her will and she would deflect his advances, at first politely and then later with greater severity. And when she saw that he persisted in his folly, she finally drove him away with abusive insults.

How the same knight wanted to take her by force, and how she miraculously escaped.

1.5 The knight chafed at being scorned and was considering what he might do. It happened then that messengers arrived from Lutgarde's sister, summoning Lutgarde to come to her. When she had set out on the road the young man with a band of followers intercepted her and endeavored to take her by force. Then the girl, leaping from the horse on which she was sitting, violently wrested herself from the hands of the youth, and fleeing throughout the night through unknown woodlands, by angelic guidance arrived in the morning at the house of her nurse. When the nurse saw her she suspected she had been raped, and she asked: "Did that young man take you by force last night?" And Lutgarde told her he had not. Nor was it unusual for the nurse to suspect this, as we have noted. For the previous evening the servants, when they saw the young man coming upon them with a strong force, fled, and as is the custom in such circumstances, loudly denounced the youth as a rapist. And he became frightened by their cries and left off pursuing the virgin and rode away. It was because of the servants' shouting and flight, then, that the innocent girl fell under suspicion.

How she foretold a grave misfortune to a retainer of the knight who attacked her.

1.6 In this affair a certain event occurred which should not be passed over in silence. When the knight had descended from his horse to seize Lutgarde, who was some distance away, a follower did him the friendly service of restraining his horse. The virgin Lutgarde, after thwarting the knight's violent attack, beheld this obstinate man, and not so much cursing as predicting, shouted: "With the hand with which you hold the horse's reins for that ravisher, you shall soon perform acts for which you shall suffer infamy here in this world." Behold then, reader, how swiftly and truly this came to pass. For soon after returning home, with that hand with which he had held the bridle, he slew his own wife, and for this he was exiled from his homeland and deprived of all his goods.

How she withstood humiliation when a crowd met her returning to St. Trond.

1.7 A short time later she left her sister and returned to the town of St. Trond, entering on horseback with her servants. Surrounded by a curious throng of people, she began to feel weighed down by an enormous burden of shame. She immediately turned her thoughts to Christ, and bravely mastering her feelings, she quickly drew back the veil from her face, saying to him: "For our sake, Lord most blameless of all, for our sake, Lord most beautiful, you were stripped of your garments, bound to a stake, wrapped in a purple cloak to be mocked by a frenzied mob. You were crowned with thorns and

hung naked on the cross. Finding nothing, then, I might give you in return, I offer up to you this shame, which I count as naught for your sake." A miraculous thing! She had scarcely finished saying this when the crowd of people, themselves feeling shame when they beheld her face, suddenly departed.

Returning then to the monastery, from that day forward she progressed spiritually and rejoiced in the greater blessings of the Lord.

(She herself revealed all the secrets of her heart to Brother Bernard, a Dominican friar and confessor to the Pope, more fully, indeed, than to me, as he was worthier and his spirit more capable of grasping them. Yet I believe that in this instance she confided in me as completely, less worthy though I am, I grant, and said that she had asked the Lord long before to one day bring shame upon her, so that she could experience herself the shame of Christ's passion.)

How the blessed Virgin consoled her when she was frightened by certain remarks of the nuns.

1.8 Henceforth, then, she removed herself from almost all human fellowship and devoted herself totally to heavenly things. And a number of jealous nuns criticized her more restricted life, which they could not imitate, and they said: "Only wait until this fervor runs its course. When it has cooled, you will see her return shame-faced to those pleasures she now foolishly scorns." In her humility the girl began to fear for herself when she heard this and dreaded that what the older nuns said of her might come to pass. But the blessed Virgin Mary appeared to her with a jubilant countenance and said: "No, most beloved daughter, it shall not be as you fear. Have no dread of returning to your former state. Under the protection of my loving care, you will be confirmed in your salvation, nor shall grace or virtue be diminished in you but day by day will be added to you in abundance."

Truly a splendid promise and greatly to be treasured! Yet when she was sweetly united with the Lord in prayer or contemplation, and some pressing business called her away, as if speaking to a close friend she would say with great simplicity and innocence of heart: "Lord Jesus, wait for me here, I will soon be free and return to you." O the remarkable simplicity of the amiable girl! O the remarkable tenderness felt for her by the Redeemer! For she found that wherever she was and whatever she was doing, he was always at hand for her.

How blessed Catherine appeared to her.

1.9 It happened around the same time that as she wept and prayed, there appeared to her in the full glory of her radiance the most blessed virgin Catherine, protectress and patroness of the monastery. When Lutgarde timidly beseeched her to pray to the Lord on her behalf, blessed Catherine answered her and said: "Have faith, daughter, for the Almighty will always increase his grace in you, until at the pinnacle of life you attain the highest merit among virgins."

These and many other things she herself told me before her death, compelled by me with the sacrament. But so that the word of truth might be confirmed by the testimony of two witnesses, blessed Catherine appeared to a certain most blessed woman, saying: "Seek Lutgarde as your mother and intercessor. She will obtain from almighty God in heaven a reward and station equal to mine."

(See then, you nuns of Aywières, the merit of this woman who dwelt forty years among you. See how greatly you profited by her. If you have all paid due reverence to her, do it more diligently. For I am certain that for those who honor her she will obtain merit, and for those who neglect her, if they are sorry, she will obtain pardon.)

How the whole convent saw her suspended in the air.

1.10 So that the greater of these events might likewise be believed and accepted as true, I will relate a most glorious miracle that was witnessed by many. On the holy day of Pentecost when the nuns at choir were singing the *Veni Creator Spiritus*, those who were in the choir very clearly saw Lutgarde lifted into the air two cubits off the ground. Nor was it strange that her body was suspended between earth and heaven, for her soul was already lifted above the world and held a place in heaven according to the promise of God. For he said, *Every place which your foot has trodden shall belong to you.*¹ How blessed then was Lutgarde by such a miracle, who both in body and soul exulted in the living God.

How bright sunlight seemed to fall upon her at nighttime.

1.11 There was in addition this most solemn miracle which I will now relate. Just as had been promised her by the mother of God, day by day she offered herself more perfectly to the Lord as a voluntary sacrifice, afflicting her body with fasts and granting her spirit no respite from prayers. And lest any slight doubt remain in the hearts of the sisters who seemed to feel some jealousy towards her, Christ honored his bride with the following miracle. At a time when Lutgarde was often keeping prolonged vigils, it happened one night that the nuns saw above her head throughout much of the night a brilliant light surpassing the splendor of the sun. This light passed not only into her but also into those who saw it, and shining within them enhanced the grace of their life in the spirit.

How the Lord gave her the gift of healing because of her compassion for the sick, and how later she was granted to understand the Psalter, and then finally, when these gifts were lost, she obtained the grace of God for as long as she lived.

1.12 She felt such remarkable pity for the weak and the sick that when she was with them, she suffered in her spirit even more torment than the afflicted. God therefore granted her a gift of healing so total that if there was a spot in someone's eye or some other malady of the hand or foot or other member, it was immediately cured by contact with her saliva or by the touch of her hand. And when she was in possession of this gift,

¹ Deuteronomy 11.24

the crowds of people were sometimes oppressive and quite often impeded her in prayer, and she said to the Lord: "Of what use, Lord, is this gift to me, which often hinders me from devoting myself to you? Take it from me, but in such a way that a better grace might be given me in exchange." And the Lord said: "What do you want to be given you in place of this grace?" And she said, "I want to be able to understand the Psalter I use in prayer, in order to feel greater devotion." And so it was done by the Lord. For as was evident at the time, she understood the Psalter with a clarity as brilliant as the miraculous light that had shone upon her. But later, when she discovered she had still not profited as much from this gift as she had thought (for the awe felt for a veiled mystery is the mother of devotion, and what is hidden is sought more eagerly, and secret things are beheld with greater veneration), she said to the Lord: "Of what good is it for me to know the secrets of Scripture, I who am coarse and ignorant, an unlettered nun?" To whom the Lord replied, "What is it that you want?" --- "I want," she said, "your heart." And the Lord said, "Nay, it is rather I who want your heart." To which she replied: "Let it be so, Lord, but in such a way that you temper the love of your heart to my heart, and I possess my heart in you, to be ever secure in your protection."

So thenceforth there was a sharing of hearts, nay, rather a union of created and uncreated spirit through a superabundance of grace, in accordance with what was said by the apostle: *Who is joined to God is made one spirit with Him.*¹

(Attend, reader, I will tell of marvels. From that day onward, just as a nurse watches over an infant in a crib with a fan to protect it from the annoyance of pesky flies, so did Christ keep watch over the entrance of her heart, so that her mind might not be troubled for a single moment by any temptation of the flesh or even a foul thought. What is strange or novel about this? He is the same as who said long ago: *Who touches you touches the pupil of my eye.*² We are accustomed to protect our eyes more than other parts of the body. Why is it strange then if Christ protected the soul of pious Lutgarde, which he compared to the pupil of his eye? I have said less than I should. Any faithful soul is of more worth than the eye of Christ's body, which lost its light in death, when in the act of redemption he offered up his whole body for our soul.)

How she suffered an affliction, was seized in the spirit, and sucked remarkable sweetness from the pierced side of Christ.

1.13 At about the same period, when she was still tender in body and in years, one night around the time of matins she suffered a violent attack of natural sweating. She was planning in her heart, then, to forgo matins so that later she might feel stronger in the service of God, especially since she thought that the sweating was good for her body. But a sudden voice shouted to her in this fashion: "Quickly arise! Why do you lie there? You should now be doing penance for sinners who are lying in their filth, not lolling about sweating." Terrified by such a cry, she quickly got up and hurried to the church, where matins had already started. And straightway at the very entrance to the church,

¹ 1 Corinthians 6:17

² Zechariah 2:8

she encountered the bleeding Christ fastened to the cross. Lowering an arm from the cross, he embraced her as she came up to him and he applied her mouth to the wound on his right side. Such sweetness did she drink in that she was stronger and more active in the service of God ever after.

Those to whom she revealed these things related that at that time and for a long time after, the saliva of her mouth surpassed the sweetness of all honey. Why does this seem strange? *Your lips, my bride, are a flowing honeycomb*;¹ and even when your tongue was silent your heart within declared the honey of Christ's divinity and the milk of his humanity.

How Christ on the cross appeared to her and she kissed his wound.

1.14 When she was suffering from some affliction of the body or the heart, she stood before an image of the crucified Christ. When she had stared at the crucifix for a long time with a fixed gaze, she closed her eyes and fell limply to the ground, like Daniel in the Bible,² and was unable to rise to her feet. While in this torpid state she would be completely rapt in the spirit, and she would behold Christ with a bleeding wound in his side. Placing her mouth on the wound, she sucked in such sweetness that she was incapable of suffering any infirmity whatever. And so it happened once that when she was suffering from a very acute fever, on the day that it reached a critical state, she straightway rose up from the bed and without any difficulty entered the convent and joined the choir for hymns.

How John the Evangelist appeared to her in the form of an eagle, and what was revealed to her through that eagle.

1.15 Once upon recalling that eagle of penetrating vision, namely John the Evangelist, who drew the living waters of his gospel from the sacred fountain of the Lord's breast, there appeared to her in spirit an eagle, its feathers so brilliantly resplendent that the whole world could be lit up by the brightness of its rays. Dazzled beyond measure at the sight of that vision too wondrous for words, she waited for the Lord to temper so glorious an image to the frailty of her sight. And thus it was done by him. So then contemplating a softened form of the vision, she saw the eagle place its beak inside her mouth and fill her soul with a flood of light so unspeakably brilliant that, to the degree possible for a living person (for it was said to Moses: *No man shall see me and live*),³ no secrets of the divine were hidden from her. For the more her heart expanded with longing, the more did the eagle pour forth his bounty, and the more deeply she drank from that torrent of pleasure.

(In this matter I have a testimony I hope is most reliable. Although in her use of common language she seemed and in fact was in a certain way very simple and unrefined, yet when privately discussing spiritual matters, never from the mouth of anyone have I

¹ Song of Songs 4:11

² Daniel 10:8-11

³ Exodus 33:20

heard speech so sincere, so ardent, and so in accordance with the spirit of truth; so much so that I very often considered myself too dull and ignorant to understand her meaning. I still remember the time and place when I was so stupefied by the subtlety of her words that if that delightful sense of utter astonishment had held me for long, it would have either rendered me mad or extinguished me entirely. But that incident does not belong to the period I am writing about now, but happened some sixteen years before her death.)

How it seemed to her that her hands dripped with oil.

1.16 There is a town in Hesbaye called Looz. Next to the church in this town there lived in service to the Lord a certain recluse, who by virtue of the holiness of her life was a close friend of pious Lutgarde. Once when Lutgarde was staying with her for a fortnight, it happened that after prayerful meditation she was filled with so much sweetness of the spirit she called the recluse to her and showed her the fingers of her hand, and squeezing them she said: "Look, sister, how the Almighty deals with me. Because I am filled with a superabundance of grace, now even my fingers are dripping as if with oil as an outward sign of the grace within." And saying this she bounded merrily through the reclusory as if she were inebriated, and indeed she truly was.

(Why is this strange? She had been invited by the Bridegroom into the wine cellar, and when she had become dear to him she ate, which is to say, she toiled and ate the food of penance; and as she became dearer she imbibed an abundance of graces; and finally, as she became dearest she was inebriated, and so rejoiced beyond words like the greatest of fools.)¹

How she was consecrated, and how a gold crown seemed to be placed upon her head, and this was seen by two people.

1.17 So then she began to long to be united more perfectly to one man alone, Christ the Lord, by the act of consecration at the hands of the bishop, and the opportunity was provided when Lord Hugh, the bishop of Liège, chose to consecrate a large number of nuns who had gathered there. Lutgarde too, then, was brought to this assemblage of virgins to be consecrated. When the said prelate was binding their heads with wreaths made from linen bands, to serve as symbols of a golden crown, and had come to Lutgarde, a simple holy man standing nearby clearly saw the bishop place a very large gold crown on her head and honor her beyond the others in this special way. Since he imagined that this had been seen by everyone, he asked a priest who was standing nearby why Lutgarde was the only one the bishop had presented with a golden crown. The priest was ignorant of the matter and laughed at him, saying: "Are your eyes turned inside out? You say the crown is gold when everyone can see it is made of linen." The blessed man smiled then and was silent, and he recognized the special merit in Lutgarde.

¹ Cf. Song of Songs 2:4

There were two witnesses to the truth of this event, since this same thing was seen by one of the consecrated nuns. Marvels give way to even greater marvels.

How Lutgarde followed Christ the Lamb completely.

1.18 Henceforth cleaving to her Bridegroom ever more faithfully, she followed the Lamb wherever he went. If we proclaim that the way of Christ is humble, behold humble Lutgarde following in his path without a trace of pride. If I note that his way is one of poverty, consider Lutgarde, so poor that she took no thought of her daily bread though she labored daily with her hands. If I regard the way of Christ to be in mercy and pity, I have seen in this life none more merciful than Lutgarde. If I pronounce the way of Christ to be in tribulation, contemplate the fasts and afflictions which Lutgarde will be shown to have undergone throughout her life beyond all men and women of our time. If we honor the way of Christ as the path to glory, then let us extol Lutgarde with incomparable praise, who dwells in her true home in heaven, as we may now see.

(In all these things Peter and Mary Magdalene followed the Lamb perfectly, but not wherever he went. But Lutgarde, with an array of virgins in her train, followed the Lamb on that path of chastity he had traveled before them.)

How Christ seemed to applaud her when she was singing, in the form of a lamb.

1.19 We have said that Lutgarde followed the Lamb unfailingly, so now behold what the Lamb gave her in recompense. It is indeed proper for the bridegroom to reward the bride, but behold how he repaid her. In the monastery of St. Catherine, every Friday at first vespers for the following Saturday, which is rightly dedicated to the veneration of the Virgin Mary, there was a verse in the responsory which Lutgarde alone was accustomed to sing, because of her gift of devotion.¹ When singing this verse she seemed to see Christ in the form of a lamb place himself upon her chest, in such a way that he laid one foot on her right shoulder and the other on her left, and placed his mouth upon her mouth, and then by sucking drew from her breast the sweetness of that miraculous melody. Nor could anyone doubt the presence of divine miracle in this song, since her voice seemed endowed then with infinitely more grace than on other occasions, and at the same time the hearts of the listeners were miraculously moved to devotion.

How she was made prioress in the monastery of St. Catherine.

1.20 Since it was not fitting for so bright a lamp to remain hidden under a bushel, it was placed on a candelabrum, so that its radiant grace might be apparent to all. By universal consent, therefore, she was appointed the superior of the handmaids of God at St. Catherine's, which is to say, she was made their prioress, for it was not customary for

¹ A responsory is a liturgical chant consisting of a series of verses and responses, sung by a cantor and a choir alternately. In this instance Lutgarde sings from Psalm 45:2 (Vulg. 44:3), *Grace is poured upon your lips*, and then the choir follows with, *Therefore God has blessed you forever*.

that monastery to have an abbess. But in her estimation she felt a grave injury had been done her, and she began preparing to change her residence and her station.

How Christ interposed his hand when she suffered violence in the kiss of a certain abbot in the same monastery, and how religious women should fly from the kisses of men.

1.21 It happened during this time that the Abbot of St. Trond, the spiritual father of the monastery of St. Catherine, returning from the general Lateran Council, was welcomed by the nuns with a procession. After a prayer was said in the church, he summoned the whole convent to the chapter house, and as is the custom among simple people, thoughtlessly gave a kiss to each of the nuns. When it was the prioress Lutgarde's turn to kiss the abbot, she steadfastly refused, but to the merriment of all she was grabbed and forcibly made to endure it. But Jesus of sublime goodness interposed the hand of his mercy, so that she did not feel the slightest stirring of sin in the man's kiss.

(Alas, this show of respect should be regarded as disgraceful rather than misguided, in which men with an outward show of piety think they can kiss women and virgins with impunity and without offense to divine law and divine grace. In defense of their error they cite the words of the blessed apostle Paul, who when writing to the Corinthians told them: *Greet one another with a holy kiss.*¹ This should not be interpreted to mean that men are to kiss women, but as Augustine maintains, that men should kiss men and women kiss women. Otherwise that most punctilious preacher of chastity would have been providing a very clear opportunity for unchastity. Wherefore he said in another place: *Abstain from all evil appearances.*² Is it not an evil appearance when contact between bodies leads to the corruption of minds? And would that it were only the corruption of minds, and not bodies as well! I am certain that if this became common practice it would lead to the corruption of bodies too.

If indeed in his rule for canons it is forbidden by Augustine, the greatest church doctor of all, to look at a woman with a fixed gaze, and a man is ordered expelled from monastic fellowship for this offense, on the grounds that by such an act though physically removed from a female, he is nevertheless corrupted in mind, what sort of punishment would Augustine have thought proper for those who are tempted to shameful acts by a woman's kiss, which involves the touching of bodies? Pliny in his book on natural history says that the glaucus fish nibbles on baited hooks from behind [and strips them of their bait without swallowing them]. This can be applied to those men who avoid the hook of fornication while grabbing the bait of wanton pleasure, and while spurning the disgrace of adultery as lovers of chastity, through their kisses and illicit fondling fall into an even graver sin. Wherefore Paul said of such men: *God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not proper.*³

I therefore believe with true justification that such men are fouler than fornicators, and by this behavior blasphemers against the Holy Spirit, who while violating chastity

¹ 2 Corinthians 13:12

² 1 Thessalonians 5:22

³ Romans 1:28

pretend that they are lovers of chastity, when they are its enemies. Therefore I bid you, virgin and spouse of Christ, and any other lover of chastity, act as Lutgarde and flee such men. Recoil from so shameful an act. If someone should try to tempt you to a so-called holy kiss, or try to bring his hand to your breast or bosom or any other part of your body, repay his kiss with your spit and respond to his fondling with your fist. And do not defer to a cleric or some high personage in this matter, for just as it is permitted to defend with blows the life of the body, so too the chastity of the mind. Regard such a man, I say, not as a servant of Christ but of Satan, not a spiritual person but an animal, not an upholder of chastity but in fact the vilest of lechers.)

How she passed into the Cistercian Order from the Order of St. Benedict.

1.22 For almost twelve years the illustrious Lutgarde was a nun in the convent of St. Catherine. Living at that time in the diocese of Liège was Master Jean de Liroux, a man of exceptional sanctity. Knowing of that blessed woman's pursuit of perfection, he advised her to abandon her position as prioress and enter the convent of Aywières as a member of the Cistercian Order. And when she pleaded as an excuse that she spoke a different language than the French nuns of that place, and preferred rather to enter a monastery of the same order at Herkenrode, where the Flemish tongue was spoken, the Lord said to her: "I want you in the end to proceed to Aywières, and if you do not do so I will abandon you." And a certain most blessed virgin, Christina by name, who was mentioned by the venerable Jacques in his *Life of Blessed Marie d'Oignies*,¹ and whose life I myself set down in writing, compelled in her spirit by God went to Lutgarde and cried out these words: "Why are you slow to fulfill the mandate given to you by God?" When Lutgarde, reasonably enough from a human view, raised the objections I mentioned above concerning the difference in language, in a vein of inspiration Christina straightway replied: "I would rather be in hell with God than be with the angels in heaven without God." This was truly a fine and worthy response. For wherever Christ is, there too is paradise.

(This is because Truth could not lie, who said to the thief on the cross: *Today you will be with me in paradise*.² And there is general acknowledgement that on that day the soul of Christ did not ascend to either the heavenly or to the earthly paradise, but descended in his divinity to hell, and with him the soul of the thief, who he foretold would be with him. He thereby showed by an irrefutable causal argument that wherever he was, there was paradise. For however hateful a place may be, the presence of Christ renders it supremely lovely and delectable and although hell cannot be said simply to be the equivalent of paradise, Christina's response was nevertheless commendable. Because it is better to choose to be in any place whatever with the supreme and uncreated good, than to be in a place however good, even the earthly or heavenly paradise, with any created good.)

¹ d'Oignies is pronounced something like (dwawn-yeey)

² Luke 23:43

Duly convinced, then, by these words of Christina, Lutgarde stood ready to face whatever lay before her. Nor was it difficult to persuade Lutgarde of anything involving the sanctity of a more perfect life. Obeying then the advice of Master Jean, she passed into the monastery of the Cistercian Order that is called Aywières, in the duchy of Brabant, with absolute serenity of mind.

When the nuns of St. Catherine heard of her departure, their grief was inconsolable. On learning of this, Lutgarde felt great pity for the distraught sisters, and when she was praying to the Lord to grant them peace, there appeared to her the glorious Virgin Mary, the sweetest of consolers. Mary praised her for choosing a house and order especially devoted to herself, and at the same time promised Lutgarde that through her intercession she would foster both spiritually and materially the community she was praying for. We can clearly see this promise fulfilled in the convent of St. Catherine even today. While almost everywhere else the discipline of that order has eroded, this monastery, now more than ever before, flourishes in virtue and abounds in worldly prosperity. And so I advise you nuns of St. Catherine to continue to ask of your mother that what she once did here on earth on your behalf, she do the same in heaven.

Let us now bring to a close the first book, which has dealt with the life of pious Lutgarde in the Order of St. Benedict, and proceed in due order to the second book.

Book II

How the blessed Virgin appeared to her when she feared she would be made an abbess, and how she was miraculously unable to learn French.

2.1 So then as the virtue of pious Lutgarde was becoming widely known, new monasteries began to be constructed in the French-speaking regions, and many of them were very eager to elect her abbess, provided that she learn to speak French to some small degree. When Lutgarde learned of this she was in great dread, and turning to the glorious Virgin Mary she beseeched her with tears to prevent it. The Blessed Mother appeared to her and said: "Be in no wise fearful on this account, for I will oppose the shield of my protection." Behold, reader, the manner in which this was averted, and you will see the utter truthfulness of Mary in her reply. Lutgarde had barely reached the age of twenty-four when she entered the monastery of Aywières, and yet in the forty years that she lived there with her French-speaking companions, she could barely learn enough French to properly ask for bread when she was hungry. When this became common knowledge, the beloved fawn of Christ was allowed to repose in the sleep of contemplation, nor did anyone arouse her or awaken her to attend to pastoral care, until she herself so desired, and it happened that she never did.

How the Blessed Virgin bewailed the Albigensian peril, and on this account Lutgarde was ordered to fast continuously for seven years on bread and beer, to appease the Lord on behalf of his people.

2.2 At the time the dreadful plague of the Albigensian heretics was threatening, the Blessed Virgin Mary appeared to her with a darkened face and a mournful countenance. Lutgarde was moved with compassion at the sight, and with a doleful cry from the heart asked of her: "O most holy mistress, why is your face so sallow and squalid, which before was so full of all graces?" And the Blessed Virgin replied: "Lo, my son is crucified a second time by heretics and false Christians. He is again being spat upon. I bid then that you take up a lamentation and fast continuously for seven years, so that the wrath of my son might subside, which now threatens the entire earth."

So then for the following seven years Lutgarde fasted on nothing but bread and beer. And behold the magnitude of the miracle. Lutgarde was often forced by her vow of obedience to try to eat some porridge, but her throat was unable to swallow even something so small as a bean. And although she herself suffered constantly from this remarkable and wondrous abstinence, yet she was happy when the other nuns were better provided with food, so that she said she was gladdened for a month if even once the convent was given a more abundant allowance. For she knew that in the granting of grace, what God had bestowed upon her as a special gift for the relief of many could not be shared by all in common.

(This is in answer to those who *frameth mischief to a law*,¹ and decree that a rule that they themselves could observe without difficulty, through the aid of grace or the favor of nature, should be observed by all in common. But for Lutgarde the longer she continued her fasts the stronger she was in body and spirit.)

How she freed Master Jacques de Vitry from a certain dangerous temptation.

2.3 When Master Jacques de Vitry had received the gift of preaching through the prayers of the venerable Marie d'Oignies, as he himself relates in his book about her life, it happened that he came to love a certain religious woman who was an invalid, not with a sinful love, but one too human. Constantly intent on comforting her, he grew slothful and began to neglect his office of preaching. Pious Lutgarde, therefore, perceiving in her spirit that his heart was bound by the snares of the devil, with much weeping began to pray to the Lord on his behalf. And when she was accomplishing nothing through prayer, she charged the Lord with being cruel in this instance, and the Lord answered her: "The man for whom you make supplication strives to thwart your prayers." Saying this, the Lord put off fulfilling what was asked of him. When Lutgarde saw this she became more impatient and shouted to the Lord in a loud voice: "What is it you intend, Lord most kind and most just? Either sunder me from yourself or release the man for whom I pray, even against his will!" A wondrous thing! No time passed between her prayer and its fulfillment. Immediately Jacques was completely set free, and he blessed both his liberator and his handmaid. After his deliverance his eyes were opened and he perceived the danger which he could not see before, blinded as he was by

¹ Psalm 94:20 (Vulg. 93:20)

human love. Nor was it long after this that the same venerable Jacques was elected to the bishopric of Acre across the sea in the Holy Land.

How she freed from purgatory a certain Simon, Abbot of Foigny, by her vehement prayers to God.

2.4 At about the same time a certain Simon, a nobleman from German lands and very well versed in letters, entered the Cistercian Order and was afterward made abbot of Foigny. Although he was fervent in his devotion, yet he inveighed against those below him with a bitter zeal and he was cut off by a premature death. He had cherished pious Lutgarde for the holiness of her life and his death left her deeply troubled. She immediately undertook fasts and penances on his behalf and asked the Lord to free the spirit of the departed. As she was very insistent in her prayers, the Lord answered her: "Be consoled. For your sake I will show favor to the one for whom you pray." But she continued to plead with greater persistence, and she received a second response, saying that the man was soon to be freed. And Lutgarde said: "By no means, O Lord, will I cease from weeping, nor will I ever be consoled until I have seen him freed." The Lord did not permit her to be tormented any further, but straightway appeared to her and brought with him the soul freed from purgatory, saying: "Be consoled, beloved, for behold the soul for whom you pray." Immediately Lutgarde threw herself face down and blessed the Lord for the liberation of Simon's soul. And the soul with praise and great rejoicing gave thanks to pious Lutgarde, and crossing over to that better place entered the heights of heaven in great glory.

This same Simon later frequently appeared to Lutgarde. Among other things, he told her that he would have spent forty years in purgatory had she not aided him by her prayers to the merciful Lord.

How she wanted to be assured of her spiritual state, and there appeared a radiant youth to console her and this was witnessed by all.

2.5 Pious Lutgarde was distinguished too by her humble fear of the Lord. She feared the Lord *as if waves swelling over her*, and with trepidation she would call all her acts into question.¹ For a long time, then, every day she would wail and pray to the Lord to make her certain in this life of her salvation. Having long felt this craving for assurance, one day she heard a voice say to her very clearly: "Be now at peace, beloved, for your life is pleasing to the Lord." Lutgarde was exultant for a short while but then once again she grew fearful. For a second time a divine voice spoke to her, saying: "Do you want Dame Marie de Rave to attest to your security?" "No," she said, "she is overly timid. She would be flustered and wait a long time before telling me what she knows." The divine voice then said to her: "In the meanwhile rest assured, my beloved. Soon you will be set at ease completely."

Scarcely four days had passed when lo, a striking young man unknown to all entered the parlor where the nuns were sitting. After offering them all a brief greeting, he asked

¹ Job 31:23; 9:28

that Lutgarde be summoned without delay. When she came he greeted her, and said in the hearing of all: "The Almighty gives you the following command. You are henceforth to be free of care, because in you the Lord is well pleased." Saying this the young man immediately disappeared, and they were unable to ask him who he was or where he had come from.

(Not much later a man of holy life received a revelation from God and came to Aywières and comforted her with the same words of reassurance.)

How she longed to die, and there appeared to her the wounds of Christ, crying out to her on behalf of sinners.

2.6 So then desiring more fervently to depart this earth and cross over to the everlasting, every day she poured out tears to the Lord. And lo, hastening to soothe her cries the Lord appeared to her, and showing her the wounds in his hands and feet and side, he said: "Behold, most beloved, my wounds cry out to you, lest in vain I have shed my blood and suffered death in vain." When Lutgarde saw and heard this she was remarkably afraid, and with dread and horror she asked what the wounds of Christ were crying out to her. And it was answered her: "By your tears and suffering you shall appease the burning wrath of the Father, so that sinners are not destroyed in death, but are converted through the mercy of God and live."

How Pope Innocent III died and straightway appeared to her.

2.7 At about this same time, after the Lateran Council had concluded, Pope Innocent III departed this life, and immediately after his death he visibly appeared to pious Lutgarde. Beholding him surrounded by huge flames she asked who he was. He replied that he was Pope Innocent. And she said with a groan: "How is it that you, our common father, are tormented so horribly?" And he replied to her: "There are three reasons why I suffer this torment. For these I was most worthy of eternal punishment, but through the intercession of the most holy Virgin Mary, in whose honor I built a monastery, at the end of life I repented and escaped everlasting death. Nevertheless, I will be punished with the fiercest torments until the day of the final judgment. The Mother of Mercy prevailed upon her son to allow me to come here to seek your suffrage." After saying this he suddenly disappeared. Lutgarde told the sisters of his death and of the distress of his departed soul, so that they might lend him their assistance through prayer. She herself felt great pity for him because of the enormity of his penance, and she afflicted herself with incredible suffering on his behalf.

Note, reader, that the three reasons were revealed to us by Lutgarde, but we leave them unspoken, out of reverence for so great a pontiff.

How Master Jean de Liroux appeared to her immediately after his death, and what Christ said to her while she was mourning his death.

2.8 An apparition most similar in kind, but very dissimilar in the atonement suffered, appeared to Lutgarde at around the same time. The venerable Jean de Liroux, whom we

mentioned earlier, in life made a pact with Lutgarde, that the first of the two to depart this earth would appear after death to the survivor. This same Jean when traveling to the Curia in Rome, on a mission in behalf of religious women being persecuted by rivals in Brabant, passed away upon reaching the Alps. Immediately after his death he visibly appeared to Lutgarde, who was standing on the grounds of the cloister. Believing him to be alive, she gestured for him to enter the parlor, where by the rules of the order they were permitted to talk. He then said to her: "I am dead and have passed from this world, but so that I might be true to the pact we made between us, I have appeared to you after death." Lutgarde immediately threw herself on the ground and asked: "What is the meaning of the triple garment you wear, now that you have been so wonderfully glorified?" And he replied: "The white represents the spotless innocence of my virginity, which I preserved from birth. The red aptly marks the toil and suffering which led to my death, and which I often endured in the cause of truth and justice. And the blue here above signifies the perfection of the spiritual life." Saying this he vanished from the sight of the dumbstruck Lutgarde. She then told Jean's sister and the other nuns of his death and the vision she had seen.

Yet when Lutgarde was lamenting that the venerable man had been taken from her, even if he had been given to God, in the midst of her grieving the Lord responded to her in these words: "Why do you weep, Lutgarde? And on what account is your heart afflicted? Am I not better to you than ten sons?"¹ Being an unlettered nun, she did not understand these words, but when she had heard them interpreted she grieved no more for the departed, but in his death she blessed the Lord in all things.

How it was revealed to her a second time that she was to fast for another seven years on behalf of sinners, and that just as Christ every day in the sacrifice of the Eucharist offered himself to the Father for sinners, so too was Lutgarde to offer herself to Christ.

2.9 When the seven-year period mentioned earlier was completed, during which she fasted on bread and beer, she received a second revelation bidding her to fast for all sinners. She willingly complied and fasted for another seven years, yet this time on bread and vegetables. An additional vision was sent to her by the Lord. Rapt in the spirit she beheld Jesus, the prince of our salvation, with wounds fresh and raw standing before the face of the Father, supplicating the Father on behalf of sinners. Turning to Lutgarde he said, "Do you see how I offer myself wholly to the Father on behalf of my sinners? So too do I want you to offer yourself wholly to me for my sinners, so that you might avert the burning zeal for vengeance that has been kindled against them." The Lord Jesus repeated this same thing to her almost every day in the sacrifice of the Mass.

That the prayers and fasts and labors of blessed Lutgarde had great power was attested to by the most blessed Marie d'Oignies. When Marie was dying, she fit Lutgarde's veil on her head, and moved by the spirit of prophecy she proclaimed: "In praying for the deliverance of souls from purgatory and for the conversion of sinners, the world under heaven has no more faithful nor more powerful intercessor than Lutgarde. She now

¹ I Samuel (I Kings Vulg.) 1:8

performs spiritual miracles in life; after death she shall perform physical ones.” Many in her lifetime and after her death experienced the truth of these words. Just as the present account will later reveal, Lutgarde does not cease to work wonders.

How a demon appeared to her and said that he had deceived a certain nun, and how that nun was liberated.

2.10 When a certain very devout nun was deceived by the devil through revelations she thought had come to her from God, pious Lutgarde prayed for her to the Lord, and the Lord answered: *Enlighten them who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death.*¹ Being unlettered, she did not understand these words of God, and asking a certain nun she was told their meaning. So then when she began to beseech the Lord with still greater insistence, the demon appeared to her, saying: “I am the lying spirit who is deceiving that nun.” She said to him: “Go to Brother Simon who lives in the monastery in Aulne, and tell the same thing to him, so that I might have a witness of the truth.” Straightway the devil obeys and Brother Simon comes to Aywières. This Simon was a man filled with the spirit of God, and as the book of his life attests, one to whom the Lord revealed many things. So then with pious Lutgarde and Brother Simon in agreement regarding the revelation of God, they immediately sent for the nun.

At once the hands and limbs of the nun contracted and became extremely stiff, and her mouth was shut so tightly that it could not be pried open with a knife. Seeing this they were seized with terrible fear, and bending their knees in prayer they implored merciful God to relieve her of such awful torment. What happened then? It was in no way fitting for the Lord to prove unyielding to the prayers of such people. As soon as the suppliants arose from praying to God, the limbs of the nun returned to their former state. She opened her mouth and taking food she was strengthened, and from that day forward she was freed from the spirit of deception. Later she was granted such great favor in life through her merits, as I myself saw, that it could be said that not only was she enlightened in the darkness herself, but through her moral example enlightened many others living in darkness.

How she liberated certain nuns from the demons that inhabited them.

2.11 I myself saw a nun of the Cistercian Order who had been tormented for many years by a demon, and who was brought to Lutgarde and liberated by the extreme earnestness of her prayers. I saw too another nun who had suffered incredible harassment for a number of years at the hands of an incubus, and through Lutgarde’s prayers was set free and purified. As she herself very often assured me, that was an exceptionally vile demon, who had persecuted the nun and polluted her body with such filth that had she not been restrained by prayers of the greatest vehemence she would have abandoned herself to public prostitution. But freed by the prayers of Dame Lutgarde, she lived a life of such serenity that it was as if she had never felt the goad of demonic torment.

¹ Luke 1:79 (Douay-Rheims)

(It is truly wondrous and greatly to be wondered at, that the Savior and Redeemer permits Satan to have power over a pure body, and a virgin's body at that. This power is not only exercised in the defilement of the flesh but leads inevitably to the corruption of the mind and the detriment of the soul. What is purer than a spouse of Christ? What is purer than a virgin, who is holy in body and spirit? And yet we have seen these things happen to such a one. What is left us then but to cry out with the apostle: *O the depth of the riches of the wisdom and the knowledge of God! How incomprehensible are his judgments, and how unsearchable are his ways!*¹ Yet we believe that by a secret and just judgment of God women are led to this defilement through an illicit excess of temptation. We cannot see how it could happen otherwise.)

How a nun named Yolanda was forewarned of her death by Lutgarde, and how after she died she appeared to Lutgarde.

2.12 A certain Yolanda, a Benedictine nun in a monastery on the Sambre River, having surrendered herself to the enticements of the world, at the encouragement of a pious woman betook herself to the convent of Aywières. She was a woman of noble birth and delicate constitution. Lutgarde with incredible insistence prayed to the Lord on her behalf, that he might forgive her sins and grant her the grace of devotion. Nor could the Lord deny Lutgarde's petition, but led the woman to a holy way of life. After she had been serving the Lord at Aywières for many years, she learned of her approaching death through divine revelation, and went to her pious mother Dame Lutgarde. "Beseech the Lord urgently in my behalf," she said, "for the end of my life is now near." Lutgarde said to her: "Await the Lord with steadfast heart, for I am certain he will deal with you mercifully and will very soon release you from the punishments you dread. But I want you to return to me after death, and upon returning first say to me *Benedicite*, then say the *Pater Noster* and *Ave Maria*, lest the devil in his usual way practice some deceit."

So then the nun died as predicted, with a remarkable fervor of spirit. Not thirty days had passed when lo, as Lutgarde was praying, the dead Yolanda appeared to her, and just as she had been asked in life, she first said *Benedicite*, and then the other prayers I named. Lutgarde answered her by saying *Dominus*, then straightway said: "How is it with you?" And the dead woman said, "The Lord did not abhor me for the enormity of my sins, rather for your sake I obtained great mercy." And saying this she disappeared. Lutgarde then with many tears blessed God in his mercy for sinners.

How her dead sister appeared to her.

2.13 But when her sister in the flesh passed from this world to purgatory, before her death had been announced to Lutgarde, suddenly in the air a mournful and terrifying voice cried out: "Pity, dearest sister, pity me, and kindly grant me the same mercy you have shown to other souls!" Prostrating herself in prayer, she understood that the soul

¹ Romans 11:33

of her sister sought her intercession, and she promptly implored the whole convent to assist her sister with many prayers and penances.

How Lutgarde was forbidden to partake of the sacrament every Sunday.

2.14 It was around this same time an event occurred that was a general source of wonder, which I will now relate. When pious Lutgarde, following the counsel of St. Augustine, was regularly receiving the body of Christ every Sunday, she was forbidden to do so by the abbess at that time, Dame Agnes, who followed a less discerning authority. And Lutgarde said to her: "I will indeed obey, dearest mother, but I foresee with great certainty that for this wrong God will take his vengeance on your body." In punishment for this act the abbess was at once afflicted by the Lord with an unbearable illness so severe that she was not able to enter the church. Her pain worsened by the moment, nor did it cease until she recognized she had been guilty of poor judgment and with a penitent heart removed the prohibition. And those nuns who had opposed Lutgarde in this matter were either notably taken by death or with a humbled spirit were converted to her view. A fitting vengeance visited by the Bridegroom on the unjust persecutors of his bride.

How a demon appeared to her at the death of a certain nun.

2.15 Her spirit always felt great pity for those who were dying, and she would visit them and urge them to confess their sins, promising a certain hope of salvation for those who repent, and when penance was done the glory of heaven. So then when a certain sister was in the throes of death and suffering a very painful end, a jeering demon appeared to Lutgarde and said: "Lo, it is I who have been tormenting that nun. When the people came, though, I had no more power over her." By *people* he meant the nuns of the convent who had gathered to commend the soul of the sister, and who had robbed him of his power by their prayers. It is a holy and pious task, then, to attend to the dying, and by praying aid them against the demons who always beset us at the end of life.

How demons frequently appeared to her, and how they feared her.

2.16 Demons would also frequently come to her and make some cruel or dreadful announcement. But she would spit at them and drive them off when they harassed her by making the sign of the cross. The demons were so afraid of her that they would avoid touching even her place of prayer as if it were white-hot iron. And though she had no understanding of the meaning of the psalms and scriptures, yet in reciting that psalm, *O God come to my assistance*,¹ and certain other verses in the Psalter, she saw the demons flee in wondrous horror and cease their evil suggestions. Whence she discovered that demons were driven off and their ability to seduce was impaired even through the power of words she did not understand.

(Brother Bernard relates that he heard her say in private that she had no fear of the devil, nor could he prevail against her in the slightest by any means of deception. But

¹ Psalm 70:1 (Vulg. Psalm 69:2)

according to the promise of God, she would powerfully crush his head, that is, the onset of temptation, beneath the heel of virtue.)¹

How she feared that she did not always say her required hours properly, and on this account the Lord sent someone to reassure her.

2.17 Pious Lutgarde then, in her remarkable yearning for complete perfection, quite strangely began to insist that in reciting the canonical hours she empty her mind of every thought whatever, good as well as bad, and devote her attention solely on the words she was saying, something that is impossible to do in this life. And when she failed in her attempts to do this, she began to be disturbed by grave doubts, and to repeat each set of prayers a second or third time, as if she had not said them at all. She was grief-stricken over this unavoidable human weakness and none of her friends could console her. Prayers were said to God on her behalf, imploring the Lord to free her from this scruple. Nor did the Almighty fail them.

For the good Lord surprisingly made use of a shepherd herding sheep, as he did once with Amos the prophet, and placed in his mouth words of consolation. The simple shepherd immediately abandoned his sheep and journeyed the thirteen miles to the convent of Aywières, and summoning Lutgarde he said in the hearing of others, “Thus says the Lord: Be tormented no longer by painful scruples in saying your hours. Your prayers are pleasing and acceptable in my sight.” Saying this, the shepherd suddenly fled, nor was there occasion to ask who he was or to learn anything further. Later, however, it was made known who he was.

(But the Lord also said to her in his own person: “Have no further fear, for I shall supply this defect in you.” Pious Lutgarde, moreover, perceiving that both messages were from the mouth of God, set her conscience at rest, and she was never again tormented by undue scrupulosity in saying her office.)

How a flame seemed to issue from her mouth while she was singing.

2.18 It can scarcely be believed with how ardent a spirit she sang the hours in service to the Lord. It happened that one day when she was singing in the choir at vespers, a certain nun who stood in the choir opposite clearly saw an actual flame rise from her mouth and vanish in the upper air. The girl almost died of fright at so unnatural a sight. When vespers were over, then, pious Lutgarde sweetly sought to comfort her, and when her fear persisted finally said to her: “Dearest daughter, I do not want you to be terrified of that vision, for you should understand that in truth it came from God.”

(Note, reader, that this is recorded to have happened to many others, and that the material flame that is seen at that time represents the longing of fervent prayer.)

¹ Cf. Genesis 3:15

How after receiving the body of Christ she did not want to forgo dinner, but told the Lord to occupy a certain sickly nun with her own abandoned meditations, and so it was done and confirmed.

2.19 We know that pious Lutgarde had excellent powers of discernment, as is revealed in the following account. One Sunday when she had received the saving sacrament of the body of Christ, and *the remainders of her thought were keeping holiday for the Savior*,¹ so that it would be burdensome for her to go to the table for bodily nourishment, she said: "Lord Jesus, now is not a suitable time for me to be absorbed in your delights. Rather go to Elizabeth, who cannot abstain from food for a single hour, and take possession of her heart, and allow me to eat and restore my strength." There in fact lived in the convent a certain nun who suffered from an infirmity of a sort that required her to eat many times throughout the day and night. Christ at once complied with the wishes of Lutgarde. Suddenly betaking himself to this nun, he filled her heart with such sweetness that contrary to her usual experience, she was able to abstain from bodily nourishment for a long time without any discomfort. In this we can observe the great discretion of Lutgarde, because she did not want to weaken her body by even a spiritual activity. She deemed it more useful to preserve her body for the many labors that contribute to the saving of souls, than to uselessly exhaust herself to the point of death at an inopportune time.

(And this is in answer to those who, having tasted the sweetness of the spirit once or twice, become enemies to themselves and cruelly scorn the body, and while striving toward God with a strengthened spirit, destroy the body that was given them as an aid to the spirit. Thus they allow the spirit, rendered powerless by the destruction of the body, to be oppressed by terrible miseries. For a body that is corrupted oppresses the soul. Paul, the sage of teachers, says in response to these men: *No man ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it*.² And indeed he nourishes it not for pleasure but for sustenance. When Abraham ascended the mountain of vision, after offering sacrifice he returned to his ass, an animal which Solomon says should be made to bear a burden, but afterwards should be given hay.³ Let the reader make of this what he will, and for the sake of brevity let us return to our story.)

How she prayed for the same Elizabeth and she was cured.

2.20 Concerning this same Elizabeth, a most unexpected miracle occurred which I will now describe. As we have said, it was necessary for her to eat almost every hour, not only during the day but sometimes even at night, notwithstanding which she was so weak she was completely unable to stand on her feet but lay continually in bed. So then when she saw clearer than daylight the miraculous power of prayer in pious Lutgarde, she asked her with passionate earnestness that she beseech the Lord for her, that he

¹ Psalm 76:10 (Vulg. 75:11) *For the thought of man shall give praise to thee: and the remainders of the thought shall keep holiday to thee.* (Douay-Rheims)

² Ephesians 5:29

³ Cf. Genesis 22.5,19; Ecclesiasticus 33.25

might grant her the strength to rise out of bed and frequent the convent, so that before her life was over she could serve Jesus Christ more fully. Lutgarde accordingly agreed to implore the Lord on her behalf. The Lord answered her in these words: *Arise, he said, arise, stand up, daughter of Jerusalem, who have drunk from the hand of the Lord the cup of his wrath.*¹

(When she had informed the lettered nuns of the Lord's response and the reason for it, they realized that Elizabeth should arise and stand up from her sick bed and return to a state of health, in which the bonds would be loosed from her neck and her captivity shattered.² This is a reference to the bondage of those who are sick in the infirmary, and willingly or not are made subject to those who serve them, not only to those who are pleasant but also the ill-tempered ones.)

And it happened just as the Lord had said. Elizabeth arose from the sickbed in which she had lain for many years and stood up to bear the burdens of the order without flagging, and for a long time afterwards served Christ the Lord in the most perfect health.

How she longed to endure martyrdom for Christ, and in her longing a vein burst over her heart and poured forth blood in wonderful abundance; and so the Lord said to her that thereafter she would receive the merit of Agnes in martyrdom.

2.21 When reflecting on the Lord and the tribulation he suffered at the hands of sinners, she burned with a wonderful longing to repay Christ and suffer martyrdom on his behalf. But just as *winter has passed, the rain is over and gone*,³ so too has the time of martyrdom passed, and so Christ prepared for her a martyrdom of a different sort, this too of the body. For it happened one night after compline that she was standing before her bed in the dormitory absorbed in prayer, and lo, she fell to thinking of those earlier times, and she began to feel a wondrous, indescribable longing to shed her blood for Christ as blessed Agnes once did. And when she was burning with so intense a desire she believed she was dying of it, a vein over her heart burst, and there issued such an abundance of blood that her tunics and cowl were soaked. Growing faint she sat down for a little, and suddenly Christ appeared to her with a joyful countenance and said: "For the fervent desire for martyrdom you have shown in the shedding of your blood, you will receive in heaven the same reward for martyrdom that the most blessed Agnes received when her head was severed for my faith. For by your desire even to the shedding of blood you have equaled her martyrdom."

This accords with what we wrote at the beginning of the first book, where it was related that a certain noble and devout matron said to Lutgarde as a young girl: "You are a good Agnes, and truly you shall be a second Agnes." O plainly a woman most blessed, whom Christ himself in a time of peace rewarded with the crown of martyrdom!

¹ Isaiah 51:17

² Cf. Isaiah 52:2 *Shake thyself from the dust, arise, sit up, O Jerusalem: loose the bonds from off thy neck, O captive daughter of Sion.* (Douay-Rheims)

³ Song of Songs 2:11

(There were two nuns who were witnesses of this most glorious event, Margaret and Lutgarde de Limons, women of great devotion. It was they who washed the garments of Lutgarde after the shedding of her blood. Another witness was the scar left by the ruptured vein, which remained up to the day her happy soul departed this world. Bearing witness too was an end to the nuisance which God had visited upon the sex of Eve to tame their pride. She was, moreover, 28 years old when this happened to her.)

How the nun Dame Matilde recovered the loss of hearing in her ears through the insertion of Lutgarde's finger.

2.22 A noble matron named Matilde, a native of the region of Liège, left her inheritance to her soldier sons and was serving the Lord in Aywières. Ravaged by the infirmities of old age, she completely lost her hearing, as often happens with the elderly. One day at Solemn Vespers when the nuns were singing at the top of their voices, one of them made a sign to inform the deaf matron of this. Understanding the sign's meaning, the matron began to bewail her deafness. Pious Lutgarde then came to her and asked her by sign why she wept. And she said: "Why am I not to weep, pitiful soul that I am, so deaf that I cannot hear the solemn song in service to God." Lutgarde felt sorry for the grieving woman, and after bowing a short while in prayer she arose, and wetting two fingers with spittle, placed them in the deaf woman's ears. A marvelous thing! Suddenly the woman felt the blockage in her ears burst with a loud crack, her ears were fully opened and she suddenly could hear. Recognizing in so splendid a miracle the power of Lutgarde, she gave magnificent blessings to the Lord.

How while recalling the passion of Christ, she was seen in contemplation by a certain priest as if completely covered in blood.

2.23 Whenever she was in a state of rapture and reflected on the Passion of the Lord, her whole body appeared to her to be covered in blood. A certain religious priest heard this said in private, and watching for an opportune time when there was no doubt she would be pondering Christ's passion, he approached her as she was leaning against a wall in contemplation. And lo, he saw her face and hands, which alone were uncovered, shining as if drenched with fresh blood, and her hair was soaked as if by dew with drops of blood. Seeing this he secretly cut off some of her locks with scissors, and carrying them in his hand into the light, he began to marvel at them in boundless amazement. Then as pious Lutgarde returned to her senses from the rapture of contemplation, so too did the locks in his hand at once revert to their natural color. Terrified beyond belief at so prodigious a sight, he almost collapsed to the ground.

(Note, reader, that the reason pious Lutgarde seemed to be red with blood was no doubt because in life she held a special place among those *who have washed their robes in the blood of the Lamb*,¹ and her body presented an outward likeness of her mind's inner meditations.)

¹ Apocalypse 7:14

How Lutgarde by her vehement prayers converted to the Lord the knight Lord Tymer, a sinful man.

2.24 A certain high-born and wealthy knight had a daughter who was a nun at Aywières. The daughter saw that her father was enmeshed in various sins and she induced him to seek prayers from pious Lutgarde, and as is customary in such instances, to ask her to receive him as a spiritual son. Lutgarde assented and undertook to pray to the Lord on his behalf. And lo, Satan appeared to a certain nun in the same monastery, saying: "Behold, Dame Lutgarde strives to free from my bonds the knight Tymer, who has served me for these many years. Let her then. She will need a long time to achieve it. As for me, even if I can accomplish nothing else, I can at least make his heart burn in the furnace of poverty and his soul shrivel like meat fried in a skillet."

And behold, reader, the liar remarkably spoke the truth. For indeed, although the knight had then a great abundance of wealth and possessions, yet in a short time he was completely ruined. When his fortune of fifteen hundred marks was consumed, and after that all his possessions were sold, he was reduced to such poverty that in his extreme need he scarcely had bread to eat. Yet despite all these adversities, he was seen to have shown such fortitude that no one doubted he was aided by the prayers of Lutgarde. We later saw him as a monk at Afflighem, the best disciplined of the monasteries of that order, and he was venerated by all for his way of life and his fortitude, remarkable in a man of that age. In this and similar ways Lutgarde rescued many from the snares of the devil by her prayers and led them to a reformed life of virtue.

How she freed a nun from temptation, and the nun miraculously obtained what she was praying for.

2.25 A certain girl of the Cistercian Order was most sorely oppressed by temptation. Many years earlier Lutgarde had appeared to her in a dream, and she was told she would be freed from temptation by her prayers. At a much later date she came to Aywières and recognized Lutgarde from her appearance in the dream, and as had been foretold, she was set free from all troublesome temptations by the extreme urgency of Lutgarde's prayers. Having experienced the power of Lutgarde in her deliverance, she then asked that she prevail upon Almighty God by her prayers to give her the strength to endure the labors imposed by her order, and to abstain from the eating of flesh. For the girl had been weak from birth and was scarcely able to go without meat even on days of fasting. Lutgarde pleaded that abstinence of this sort was unsuitable for a girl of so tender an age, but when the girl nevertheless insistently begged that her wishes be fulfilled, Lutgarde was finally overcome by her tears and said: "Go from hence, and from this day forward you will have the power to abstain from meat and observe the rules of your order, and to endure whatever other hardships you choose."

A truly strange and startling miracle. The girl departed and returned to her convent, and as usual meat was served to her in the infirmary. When she saw it presented on the plate, it had all the appearance of male genitalia, and she was struck with sudden horror at the sight, and turning her face away was completely unable to eat it. After a number

of similar attempts, she conceived in her mind such an abhorrence of meat that after hearing the words of Lutgarde she never ate it again. Moreover, not only was it very easy for her to perform without trouble the tasks of the order, but also whatever else she chose to do in the way of mortifying her body. This same girl, now very old and an abbess of a convent, related this to me with the greatest embarrassment, but the renown of pious Lutgarde compelled her to tell the story.

How she prophesied to a woman suffering painful temptations that she would die on Good Friday.¹

2.26 A certain religious girl named Hespelendis, beset by a host of temptations and driven to despair by an excess of sorrow, asked Lutgarde for the suffrage of her prayers. When Lutgarde had said many prayers on her behalf and shed many tears for her, she told her what the Lord had revealed: “You should take comfort, dearest one, because on Good Friday after the adoration of the cross, when the priest raises the cross and says, *Behold the wood of the cross*, you shall be freed from every assault of temptation and attain the assurance of consolation.” And so did it come to pass.

How a certain man, at only the sight of her, felt contrition for his sins and after making amends was freed from them.

2.27 When the venerable Jean, Abbot of Afflighem, brought with him a man to visit Lutgarde, at the sight of her the man shrank back with a troubled look on his face. The abbot was bewildered by this and when they had withdrawn from her presence, he said to the man: “Did you see the holy woman?” And sighing deeply the man said, “I saw her, and at the sight of her, as if at the sight of the divine majesty of God, I was struck with such horror for my sins that I was set free from them by the aid of her intercession. Nor will I ever, by the grace of God, sink back into sin.” And the illustrious abbot related that this is what came to pass.

How she healed an epileptic.

2.28 A woman had a son named Jean who suffered from epilepsy. This had long caused her much worry and sorrow, and it happened that she heard in a dream words of this nature: “Go to Dame Lutgarde who dwells in Aywières, and through her your son will be healed.” When morning arrived, she came with her son to Aywières and presented him to Lutgarde. After saying a prayer, Lutgarde promptly placed a finger in his mouth and with her thumb traced the sign of the cross on his chest. And from that day forward the boy was freed from all the trials of epilepsy.

How on the Feast of All Saints a host of saints appeared to her.

¹ The death of the girl is a conjecture by the composer of the chapter headings. These weren’t written by the author himself.

2.29 Once when the Feast of All Saints was being celebrated, a vast multitude of saints appeared to Lutgarde in a vision, and the Holy Spirit revealed to her that she was full of the spirit and grace of all of them.

(What is strange in this? For if according to [Augustine] virtues are gifts, what gift or grace should she have been without, who was resplendent with every virtue?)

How Dame Sibyl, feeling oppressed by her service to Lutgarde, was answered through a voice in the night.

2.30 Once when pious Lutgarde was suffering from a bodily illness, Dame Sibyl de Gages, who had always served her with great devotion from the time she entered the order, was almost undone by long toil and exhausted in body and soul. Provoked by a spirit of evil she said but once in her heart: "Why should I toil so as a servant to Dame Lutgarde? Never did my mother toil so for anyone she served in life, nor is it right for me to submit to such harsh servitude." Without delay, that very night she heard a voice saying to her, *I did not come to be served, but to serve.*¹ When she heard this she reproached herself severely, and ever after served Lutgarde with the greatest joy and contentment.

How a desperate man when speaking to her saw a luminous brilliance above her and was comforted.

2.31 A certain man, tainted by the corruption of sin and in a state of despair, was brought to her so that he might at least find some consolation in her words. As soon as he sat down next to her and began to hear her words, he saw above her a dazzling light of unspeakable brilliance. Exhilarated by the sight and greatly comforted by the hope of forgiveness, the man departed.

How during the canticle, Te Deum, the Blessed Virgin appeared to her.

2.32 It often happened that when she was ruminating on a sacred song, the Holy Spirit revealed to her the power and meaning of the verses. It happened then one night that while she was reciting the canticle *Te Deum*, and came to the verse *Becoming man to set us free you did not spurn the Virgin's womb*,² the most blessed Virgin Mary appeared to her as if rejoicing, and she understood that the Blessed Virgin took great pleasure in this verse, which proclaims that she conceived the son of God. Lutgarde herself revealed this to me as to a beloved son, and advised that whenever I say this verse I bow deeply in praise of the glorious Virgin. Which I have long done and still do, and I advise all who read this to do the same.

How when she felt sorry for a poor woman the Lord said to her, My Portion.

2.33 Seeing a poor woman in dire need, she was moved by a remarkable spirit of compassion to help her, and at once the Lord said to her in the spirit: "You read in the

¹ Matthew 20:28

² *Tu ad liberandum suscepturus hominem, non horruisti virginis uterum.*

Psalms, and you say in prayer to me, *O Lord, my portion, I have said that I would keep your law.*¹ Which you should understand to mean that I am your portion, and that you have no other. Therefore you should respond to the needy woman in this way: *Gold and silver I have none, but what I have I give you.*² And then you should but pray for her, and you will have given what is yours, and thus you will have kept my law.”

Lutgarde felt wonderfully enlightened by these words of God, and she went to Dame Sibyl de Gages and informed her of what the Lord had told her. When Sibyl examined the commentary on that passage from Psalms, she very plainly saw that it matched what the Lord had told Lutgarde. It is clear then that sacred scripture has been interpreted in the same spirit as it was written.

(In like manner when a monk of Afflighem was sent to a very dissolute parish and humbly asked Lutgarde to pray to the Lord to protect him in so perilous a position, she answered him saying: *With expectation I have waited for the Lord and he was attentive to me.*³ The verse proved to be so appropriate to his situation that he did not doubt that pious Lutgarde had answered from the spirit of God.)

How she was renowned for the spirit of prophecy in many things; how the name and merit of the virgin Osanna were revealed through her, which for many years had been unknown.

2.34 Lutgarde was widely and deservedly renowned for the spirit of prophecy. A certain priest came to the monastery of Jouarre in France, and when he was praying at night in a crypt where the bodies of saints were reposing, he unexpectedly uncovered a tomb made of alabaster, belonging to a saint whose name or merit he was unable to discover. He later asked Lutgarde to pray to the Lord to reveal the name of the saint. Assenting to the man’s request she gave herself over to prayer and immediately obtained what she was seeking. For the saint appeared to her and said: “I am the virgin Osanna, once daughter of the King of Scotland. Brought to French lands through a miracle of God, I lived a holy life. I died there and was solemnly buried, but in the course of time the inhabitants lost all memory of me.” When Lutgarde reported this to the man she added: “I would like for the Lord to reveal these same things to you to verify their truth.” And he said, “I am not worthy that such things should be shown to me.” To which she replied, “Although you may not be worthy, yet she is worthy that her praises should be worthily proclaimed.” Without delay Lutgarde prayed to the Lord for confirmation, and that same night the virgin appeared three times to the man and told him her name was Osanna. *And he who saw this gave testimony, and we know his testimony to be true.*⁴

How she foretold the return of a certain apostate to his order.

¹ Psalm 119:57 (Vulg. 118:57)

² Acts 3:6

³ Psalm 40:1 (Vulg. 39:2)

⁴ John 19:35

2.35 There was a devout nun at Parc-aux-Dames, near Louvain, who was grieving inconsolably for her brother in the flesh, a Franciscan who had renounced the order twelve years before. Lutgarde was accordingly asked to pray to the Lord for the apostate, because it was thought his sister was being driven mad with grief. Feeling pity for the both of them, she said a prayer to the Lord, and returning from prayer she said: "Tell that good girl to set her mind safely at ease, because her brother will return this year to his order." And we saw this come to pass, and very unexpectedly too, since he was one who had been thoroughly ensnared in the ways of the world.

(And let it not trouble my readers if someone has left the Franciscan Order or others through apostasy. For none of these orders is nearly as great as the habitation of Christ, where eleven good men bore with the treacherous Judas; and none is better than heaven itself, from which the angels fell.)

How she foretold the death of the Duchess of Brabant.

2.36 At about the same time the celebrated Duchess of Brabant, daughter of King Philip of France, was stricken with a grave illness. She had long held Lutgarde in great affection and she sent word for her to pray to the Lord on her behalf. After praying for her, Lutgarde immediately sent back word that under no circumstances should the duchess rise from bed, but should fully prepare herself through confession and await the Lord with the greatest confidence of heart. Very soon after this the duchess died, just as Lutgarde had foretold. After her death she appeared to Lutgarde and indicated to her by sure signs that beyond all hope, through the intercession of the glorious Virgin Mary, whom she had loved in life with amazing devotion, she had been freed from the punishments of purgatory.

(The devout and venerable Dame Margareta de Velpia told me these things and I wrote them down. The same thing happened too with the nobleman Lord Godfrey, son of Lord Godfrey the castellan of Brussels, whose death Lutgarde announced to the sisters before it was known from elsewhere.)

How she identified a woman's secret temptation and freed her from it.

2.37 A recluse of Court-Saint-Etienne, tormented at a very young age by a most grievous temptation, went to pious Lutgarde so that she might pray for her. When Lutgarde asked her the nature of the temptation the girl was afraid to say, and Lutgarde said to her: "Lo, the Lord has revealed to me what you are ashamed to disclose." Saying this she then laid bare the full state of her heart, which the girl had been unwilling to reveal even to a priest. Encouraged then to confess, after the confession of her sins and the reforming of her ways, the girl was left so comforted and so completely relieved of all torment that ever afterward she served the Lord with the greatest eagerness and joy of the spirit.

(There is evidence that a quite similar thing happened to Werric, a lay brother of Aywières. What is strange in this? For in fact Lutgarde had with her in spirit one whose eyes are brighter than the sun. This is evident from what follows. A man had committed

a sin in a remote place, and he was afraid to confess it to a priest. And behold, not long after this, a pilgrim, as it seemed, asked him to wash his head for him, that the man might be granted pardon for the sin that was causing him the greatest distress. When the man began to do this, he discovered on the crown of the pilgrim's head a very bright eye, and he shouted: "O unnatural, a person with an eye on top of his head!" The pilgrim replied: "This is the eye that saw you sinning in secrecy, and from which no secrets can be concealed." Saying this, to the man's astonishment the pilgrim vanished from his sight.)

How she freed by her prayers a priest that was tormented in hearing confessions.

2.38 Pious Lutgarde often admonished the priests she knew with remarkable solicitude, encouraging them with wondrous grace to diligently care for the flock entrusted to them, and to free from the bondage of demons the souls redeemed by Christ. When I had entered into the priesthood at a young age, unworthy as I was, and had not yet embraced the Dominican Order, I was compelled to perform the office of deputy bishop in hearing confessions, a role which I did not deserve and which was beyond my powers. After setting out on this task with great trepidation, my ears were tormented from listening to sins and I began to be agitated by the goads of temptation. Seized then with great terror and dread, I went to pious Lutgarde, as to my own special mother, and in anguish explained to her my plight. Commiserating with me she went off to pray, and when she came back she said with great confidence: "Return, son, to your monastery, and perform your assigned task in caring for souls. Christ will be by your side to teach and protect you. When you are hearing confessions, in his might he will rescue you from the darts of the enemy, and to make up for the lack of knowledge you find troubling, he will grant you a greater abundance of grace."

A remarkable thing happened. Although I blush to relate this about myself, yet in the praise of Christ and his handmaid I will not be silent about what occurred. For as long as I have performed the role of confessor, from that day to the present an interval of sixteen years, I have experienced the utter truthfulness of the prophecy of Lutgarde concerning me. And although at other times, when not engaged in hearing confessions, I have often suffered unbearable torment from temptation, yet in taking confessions the fouler the things I hear, the less I care about them, and the less I am moved by hearing them.

How two angels were seen escorting her to the altar; and how on another occasion before her death the blessed Virgin Mary and blessed John the Baptist were seen standing on either side of her.

2.39 So that the merit of Lutgarde might be made known to any at Aywières who by chance thought slightly of her, this solemn miracle occurred which I will now relate. It was Lutgarde's habit to fortify herself every Sunday with the sacrament of the body of Christ. Once when there was no one to help support her weak body as she walked to the altar, it was granted to several nuns to see quite clearly two angels holding her between them and leading her to the altar. Likewise on another occasion there was most clearly

seen the glorious Virgin Mary and blessed John the Baptist dutifully escorting her. But this happened much later, when the time was at hand for her to be taken from this world.

How she had a knowledge of an unknown language when consoling a certain woman who was in despair, and how this woman was liberated through her.

2.40 She strove with remarkable solicitude to comfort and strengthen those suffering temptation and tribulation. And it was truly wondrous how God had conferred on her the grace to do this, for no one thus afflicted ever departed from her unrelieved. A certain woman, completely despairing of all hope of forgiveness, came to the monastery and entered the parlor. The nuns asked her to receive consolation and place her hope in God, who does not want the death of a sinner, but that the sinner be converted and live. Their efforts were in vain and she tried to flee, but the nuns restrained her and asked her to wait for pious Lutgarde. For although Lutgarde could not console her with words, being a Flemish speaker, yet she could pray to the Lord on her behalf. The woman moreover spoke nothing but French. Lutgarde promptly appeared, and she withdrew with the woman to a secluded place, for she sensed in her spirit that the woman was in the sorest tribulation. Everyone began to laugh, wondering how the women could converse when each spoke a language unknown to the other. But after the two had sat together for a long time, the woman arose, her confidence in the hope of redemption fully restored, and returning to the parlor said to the nuns: "Why did you say that this holy woman was Flemish, whom I found to be thoroughly French? There is indeed no one else under heaven who could have recalled me by their words to the hope of forgiveness."

(It is not strange that the women could have conversed on this brief occasion, since Lutgarde was filled with that Spirit which filled the disciples gathered at Pentecost with a knowledge of many tongues. Father Bernard relates that he saw Lutgarde and Guiard Bishop of Cambrai, a holy and venerable man who was as utterly ignorant of Flemish as she was of French, speaking together and understanding one another. I myself saw one woman who on the day of Pentecost from the third hour until evening had a knowledge of all tongues, but I do not wish to name her because she is still alive.)

How when she had been weeping a long time for sinners the Lord appeared to her and wiped the tears from her eyes with his own hand.

2.41 She afflicted herself with long lamentations for sinners, and every day her face was so wet from weeping it was as if her eyes were a fountain of tears. Her pain and sorrow were so terrible to behold that one could scarcely look at her without deep anguish of the heart. When it pleased the Lord of mercies to relieve her of such suffering, he appeared to her as she was wailing in tears, and he applauded her for pleading so long and faithfully on behalf of wretched souls. Then with the very hand that he had stretched out on the cross for sinners, he wiped the tears from her face, saying: "I want you to find comfort in these lamentations for my sinners, and I will not allow you to exhaust yourself further in weeping. You shall persist in prayer, but with a serene fervor,

and in this way, as before through your tears, you shall worthily turn aside the wrath of the Father.” This she did without wavering up to the day of her death.

How for five years she was visited daily by angels, and often by the mother of God or apostles, and yet nothing sufficed her save God alone.

2.42 Five years then passed, during which (as she herself told me amid copious tears) she was visited almost daily by the mother of Christ herself, or by the apostles or other special saints, not to mention the continuous visits of angels. And yet despite all this she did not find perfect rest for her spirit until she found the saint of saints, unspeakably sweeter than them all, since he is the sanctifier of all.

(Pious Lutgarde responds like the bride in the Song of Songs whose soul has melted away. She is wounded, swoons, pants. She rises and seeks in the streets the patriarchs of the Old Testament, and in the broad ways the saints of the new age of grace. She passed but a little beyond them, because he is not far from each of us, and directing her mind’s gaze heavenward she found her soul’s love.¹ Just so did Peter pass the watchmen of the city -- Elias, Jeremiah, or one of the prophets, even John the Baptist himself, the close friend of the Bridegroom – to find the one he loved. To whom he said: *You are Christ, son of the living God.*² Peter found the Christ who was the son of God and would perish; Lutgarde found the Christ who rose from the dead and will perish no more. Peter denied him at his Passion and lost him; Lutgarde found him reigning in heaven and held to him. She held to him, I say, and will not let him go. For the more ardently she sought him the more tightly she clings to him. Happy was she in the seeking, but more happy is she in the holding. She held him by faith and did not let him go by inconstancy. But now let us look at the threefold nature of her search.)

How her life fell into three stages, and how this is related to the three beds in the Song of Songs.

2.43 In the *Song of Songs* three beds are distinguished, corresponding to the three states of the soul. The first is where it is said: *In my bed at night I sought him whom my soul loves.*³ The second is that bed of Solomon surrounded by sixty of the most valiant of Israel.⁴ The third is the one of which it is said: *Our bed is flowery.*⁵ The first bed corresponds to the state of penance, which is the state of one beginning; the second corresponds to the state of battle, which is the state of one advancing; and the third is

¹ Cf. Song of Songs 3:1-4 *In my bed by night I sought him whom my soul loves. I sought him, and found him not. I will rise, and will go about the city. In the streets and the broad ways I will seek him whom my soul loves. . . . The watchmen who keep the city found me: Have you seen him, whom my soul loves? When I had a little passed by them, I found him whom my soul loves. I held him, and I will not let him go.* (Douay-Rheims)

² Cf. Matthew 16:13-16 *And he asked his disciples, saying: Whom do men say the son of man is? But they said: Some John the Baptist, and others Elias, and others Jeremiah, or one of the prophets. Jesus said to them: But whom do you say I am? Simon Peter answered and said: You are Christ, the Son of the living God.* (Douay-Rheims)

³ Song of Songs 3:1

⁴ Song of Songs 3:7

⁵ Song of Songs 1:15

the state of the contemplative life, which is the state of one who has been perfected. In the first bed one lies wounded, in the second weary, in the third cherished.

In the first, then, that is in the bed of penance, although she was never wounded by the stroke of mortal sin, pious Lutgarde nevertheless sought the beloved perfectly when with the Psalmist she bewailed each night the sins of her ignorance, thoroughly bathing the bed of her conscience and watering her couch with a remarkable abundance of tears.

In the second bed, the bed of battle, Lutgarde sought the beloved when she warred against the flesh and subdued it by her remarkable toil and abstinence, vanquished the world by her extreme poverty and humility, and cast down the devil through her prayer and healing tears. This bed was surrounded by sixty of the most valiant of Israel when, as we have written, she was protected not only by angels but even the mother of Christ herself, along with a host of other saints.

In the third bed, which is the bed of repose, Lutgarde sought the beloved perfectly when she relied on neither angels nor saints but through contemplation sweetly reposed with the Bridegroom alone. Whence she could say along with Isaiah: *For my bed is so narrow that another would fall out, and my small blanket cannot cover two.*¹ This bed is called flowery, for it is bestrewn with virtues in springtime abundance and is redolent with sweet acclaim. It is called *our* bed, which is to say it is shared only by the Bridegroom and his bride, so that she could say: *My beloved is mine and I am his, who feeds among the lilies.*² And that verse: *I belong to my beloved, and his desire is for me.*³

What is strange in this?

Love knows not a master, love knows not domination,
However high a lover's rank, his love's of the same station.

Otherwise she would be called a handmaid and not a bride. This mystery was prefigured in our first parents, when Eve was taken from Adam's side and not his foot. Accordingly, Lutgarde's spirit was so absorbed in God that like the Queen of Sheba swooning in wonderment, *she no longer had any spirit in her,*⁴ but was totally translated into God, like a drop of water into a vat of wine, and was mingled with him as a single spirit. And this is what Christ, when hurrying to his passion, sought from the Father for those who would believe, saying: *Just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, so may they too be one in us.*⁵

¹ Isaiah 28:20

² Song of Songs 2:16

³ Song of Songs 7:10

⁴ I Kings (III Kings Vulg.) 10:5

⁵ John 17:21

But because we have discoursed at length in this second book on a variety of matters we deemed useful, let us pause briefly to catch our breath, so that we might proceed more pleasantly to the story of her precious death.

Book III

How she lost her sight eleven years before her death and thereby gained a more brilliant inner light.

3.1 Now that we have faithfully completed the second book, we begin the third, which shall treat of Lutgarde's passing. Almost eleven years before she departed this world, she experienced a kind of prelude to a very quiet life and a happy death. For like the patriarchs Jacob and Isaac, she was deprived of sight in both eyes, and obtained to an even more perfect degree the brilliance of heavenly light. For it was not fitting that her mind that was illuminated by the dazzling radiance of the light within, should be obscured in a way by the dimness of the light from without. For who could doubt that the spiritual acuity of the mind is dulled by images of material things, which are known to flow through the eyes into the mind from the outside world? So then though she was blind to the outer world, in her mind she dwelled entirely in light.

The only thing Lutgarde lamented about her blindness was that she could no longer see her spiritual friends in this life. Christ in his goodness, though, quickly relieved her of this wonderfully innocent sentiment, and thereafter she prayed only to see her friends in paradise.

(And in this chapter Brother Bernard added what he had heard from her own mouth, that the Lord answered her: "May you patiently accept the blindness I have given you, for I promise that I will take you from your body up to heaven without suffering the pains of purgatory. And the friends whom you regret no longer seeing in life, I will preserve for you to see in the eternal homeland.")

How Jordan of sacred memory, Master of the Order of Preachers, appeared to her and said that he was among the choirs of apostles and prophets.

3.2 Somewhat later Jordan of blessed memory, Master of the Order of Preachers, having long had a desire to visit the Holy Land, was returning from there by sea when, by a secret judgment of God, he drowned along with a great number of others, including two brothers of his order. Immediately from the summit of heaven down to the ship in which the drowned man lay, a huge column of light miraculously appeared and shone in the night for a space of five hours. When his holy body was cast ashore, a heavenly lamp flashed brightly above him three times, and a fourth time above his fellow brother Gerard, and then withdrew into a cloud. Witnessing these events were Catholic Christians, Greek schismatics, and heathens.

One of our brothers clearly described these events in a poem that contains among other things the acts of Jordan.¹

He went off to the Holy Land
To see his brothers there,
But when coming back by sea
And sinking, he began to sing
And call on Christ a blessing,
And thus straightway rose up to heaven,
As we may know by certain signs.

For lo, at once there does appear
A mighty beam of brightest light
Which shining down from paradise
Illuminates his sacred body.
He wanted them who saw to know
The place to where his soul had passed,
Through a sign so manifest.

When the saint was washed ashore,
A lamp from heaven did appear
And shone three times above his corpse
And then a fourth to mark the death
Of him who traveled with him.
This done it hastened to return
And in a cloud it vanished.

His corpse of wondrous fragrance
Was cared for by the faithful.
Latins, Greeks and unbelievers
In a rare and special manner
Gave praise to Christ with tears.
In such magnificence the truth
Was shown and thrice attested.

We heard of these events through brothers of the Teutonic Knights who were honored to witness them with their own eyes. But we also read an identical account in a letter from the Dominican prior in Venice.

How in the same year on Christmas Eve Master Jordan appeared to her and said that her death was imminent.

¹ The poem was reproduced in full in the author's *Book of Bees* (Bonum Universale de Apibus), where he tells us that he himself composed the verses, at the request of fellow Dominicans. It was written in seven-line stanzas of iambic tetrameter and has a demanding rhyme scheme (a-b-a-b-b-a-b).

3.3 In the same year, then, on Christmas Eve, when Lutgarde was praying from the first to the sixth hour and was feeling in her spirit a kind of darkness, she began to grow so weary that she cried out: "Lord, what is it that I am feeling? What is this thing I suffer? Surely if I had some friend on earth or in heaven who might pray for me, I would not feel such hardness in my heart." When she was saying this with tears, lo, suddenly before her mind's eye there appeared a spirit so bright and glorious that she did not recognize it for its dazzling brilliance. And Lutgarde said: "Who are you, Lord?" And he replied: "I am Brother Jordan, once Master of the Order of Brothers Preachers. I have passed from this world to glory, and raised on high I now shine among the choirs of prophets and apostles. Lo, I have been sent to console you on this beloved holy day. Be now assured of your reward, for you shall soon be crowned by the Lord. And till the end of your life continue to recite diligently the psalm *May God have mercy on us*,¹ along with the Collect of the Holy Spirit, which you promised to say for our order at my request when I was living." And when pious Lutgarde asked him about a certain brother of the order, he answered: "For the obedience he showed to me and the love he showed to you, God will soon bless him." Saying this he disappeared, leaving her as thoroughly consoled as she had ever been.

(After his death the venerable Father Jordan revealed to a brother of the order almost these same things, although in a different way. And he showed by his distinguished habit that in heaven he had been placed in the ranks of exalted prelates. Lutgarde had had tremendous love for this revered man in life, and he in turn had faith in her above all women, so that he proclaimed her the mother and nurse of the entire Dominican Order. We have seen that she was steadfast in her devotion to these brothers above all others and rendered diligent service to God every day especially on their behalf.)

How she completed a seven-year fast a third time.

3.4 When the second period of seven years had passed, during which she fasted on only bread and vegetables, she received a revelation that she should undertake a third fast, whereby God might ward off that dreaded disaster that seemed sure to befall the Church of Christ at the hands of a certain enemy.² From that time till the end of her life, then, she fasted continuously without interruption, never breaking her fast a single day, not even on the most solemn holy day of Easter. She died in the seventh year of that salutary fast, as we shall later describe more fully. Nor will her fast fail to bear fruit, as we can now hope for with the greatest assurance. For she said to me in the year before her death, when I was in grave fear of the aforesaid peril: "You can set your mind at ease, dearest one, for I am confident that he who is called the secret betrayer of the Church will either be brought low by the prayers of the faithful, or will soon perish and leave in peace the Church which it was thought he would overthrow." We have not yet seen what she foretold, but we have full faith that it will soon be accomplished.

¹ Psalm 67 (Vulg. 66)

² The reference is to the Holy Roman Emperor Frederic II (1211-1250).

(For we have seen that of all the things which she predicted would happen, not a single one has gone unfulfilled, full proof that she drew her words from the spirit of God.)

How Cardinal Jacques died in Rome and on the fourth day appeared to Lutgarde, who had been rapt into heaven, and he told her he had been freed from purgatory.

3.5 At about the same time the worthy and venerable man of God Jacques, once Bishop of Acre and later Cardinal of the Roman Curia, of whom we have made mention earlier, passed from this world in Rome on the eve of the Feast of Saints Philip and James. On the fourth day after his burial, that is, on the Feast of the Cross, pious Lutgarde, not knowing of the event, since she was living in the region of Brabant thirty days distant from Rome, was rapt into heaven in ecstasy and saw at that same moment the soul of the said bishop being brought into paradise. The spirit of Lutgarde welcomed him in heaven and said: "O most reverend Father, I did not know that you had died. But when did you take leave of your body?" And he replied: "It has been four days now, for I spent three days and two nights in purgatory." Then Lutgarde asked in wonderment: "And why did you not inform me immediately after your death, so that you might be absolved from your punishment by the prayers of our sisters?" And he said: "The Lord did not want you to be distressed by my punishment, but rather that you be consoled by my deliverance and glorification once my penance was concluded. You, moreover, will soon follow me." With these words Lutgarde returned to herself, and she announced to the sisters with the greatest joy the day of Jacques' death, his penance in purgatory and glorification.

(This truth had two witnesses. On the fourth day after his death the Lord revealed to a Dominican brother in Rome, where Jacques had originally been buried, the same details concerning his purgatory and glorification. Brother Bernard, moreover, learned from Lutgarde herself that this same thing had happened to her with a number of her friends. What is more obvious than this? What Jew or Gentile in his unbelief could deny such an obvious truth? He had scarcely died in Rome, and on the fourth day she learned of it in Brabant. Let that vile slanderer blush, who said and wrote that those who record the fantastic visions of lowly women should be considered impious. By this slander he meant to brand the venerable Jacques, who recounted in elegant language the most blessed life of the blessed Marie d'Oignies.)

How she foretold the day of her death five years prior.

3.6 In the fifth year before her death, on the third Sunday after Pentecost, the Gospel beginning, *A certain man made a great feast*,¹ was being read in church. Inspired by a spirit of prophecy, Lutgarde said to Dame Sybil de Gages, the more learned nun who was entrusted to attend to her in all things: "You should know, dearest one, that on the Sunday when this Gospel is read I will have died and my soul shall be transported to the wedding feast of the Lamb." Because of this Sybil awaited with great anticipation the Sunday that Lutgarde had foretold, thinking it would be the day of her death. But when

¹ Luke 14:16

a year later the day came and it was evident Lutgarde had not died, Sibyl believed the prophetic vision to be an illusion and for a time forgot of it. But when the fifth year had rolled round, on the same Sunday that Lutgarde had predicted, her dead body lay on a bier and the Gospel was being read in church at morning mass. When she heard it, Sibyl remembered what had passed before and was astonished, and she proclaimed to the wonderment of all how five years earlier Lutgarde had foretold this in a prophetic spirit.

How four years before her death, when the Tartars were sweeping through many kingdoms and it was feared that they would spread through the whole of Germany, she predicted that they would not advance but would withdraw.

3.7 Four years before her death the extremely fierce Tartar people burst out of their homeland and laid waste to Greater Hungary in the east and Lesser Hungary in the west, also a considerable part of Turkey and Greece, Bulgaria and Russia. The land and people of Poland too were ravaged and their powerful leader killed. The Tartars then began to invade a Teutonic region, namely Bohemia, and there was the greatest fear throughout France and Germany that they would attack and lay waste to these regions as they had to other lands. So then Brother Bernard, a friar of the Order of Preachers and confessor to the Pope, shocked by this terrifying news, came to ask Lutgarde that she urgently pray to the Lord to ward off the Tartar scourge from German lands. And she said: "I have not begun to pray to the Lord about this matter. I am now certain that the Tartars will not advance to these lands." And Bernard accepted this just as if it had been a voice from heaven.

How Baldwin of Barbenzon, Prior of Oignies, was shown to her after his death.

3.8 Around the same time the venerable Baldwin of Barbenzon, the prior of Oignies and once chaplain at Aywières for many years, a most holy preacher of the word of God, against the advice of his friends became involved in worldly affairs in an unworthy fashion. Assailed by a grave illness as punishment, the day before he died he ordered that the finger of blessed Marie d'Oignies be shown to him.¹ When he saw it he said, "O venerable lady, in life you promised to help me at the hour of my death. So help me now, O lady, help me, for the time is at hand." And so he died and was buried there in Oignies with due veneration.

Our fellow friar Bernard attended his funeral rites and immediately after the burial came to Aywières. Pious Lutgarde greeted him as soon as he arrived and said: "Has Dom Baldwin died?" He was startled by so sudden and unexpected a question. "He died," he said, "and has now been buried. What happened else?" She replied: "My lady Marie d'Oignies appeared to me at that very moment, saying: 'Arise, arise, O dear one, make haste to beseech the Lord, because this very hour the soul of our friend Baldwin stands in judgment before God, to give an account of his acts and omissions.'"

¹ This relic of Marie in the monastery of Oignies was set in a phylactery created some ten years earlier by the celebrated metalworker Hugo d'Oignies. The work has survived and is part of the collection of the Royal Museums of Art and History in Brussels.

(Behold, O venerable Marie, how true you were in your testimony and how faithful in your promise, who chose to appeal to pious Lutgarde above all others for the suffrage of her prayers. For when alive on earth you proclaimed her most powerful in delivering souls from purgatory, and now rejoicing in heaven you beseeched her aid in behalf of a departed friend.)

How she contemplated the face of Christ, in accordance with the verse in the Song of Songs: My soul melted when my beloved etc.

3.9 Asked by a close spiritual friend what she experienced when she beheld the face of Christ in contemplation, Lutgarde answered: "Of a sudden there appears to me an incredible brightness, and I see in a kind of flash the indescribable beauty of the glorified Lord, and did this not pass quickly from my sight, I could not bear it and live. After this flash the brightness of understanding remains, and when I seek in this brightness the one whom I had seen for an instant, I do not find him."

(Note then, reader, that this is the very thing expressed in the Song of Songs: *My soul melted when my beloved spoke. I sought and I did not find him, I called and he did not answer me.*¹ What does it mean for Christ to speak in the soul, if not to display the riches of his goodness, his wisdom and his beauty, so that the soul might thereby measure how good and wise and adorned with virtues one must be to merit his perpetual love. Therefore the soul when hearing him melts with desire and strives to obtain whom it sees, but because the time of perfect vision has not yet come, it suddenly loses him whom it seemed to have in its presence. And so the more ardently it loves, the more diligently it seeks him, and the mind grows more capacious to possess him, the more frequently it is roused to search for him.)

She said further that the eyes of Christ shine with so brilliant a light that if that light were to vie with the splendor of the sun, it would obscure the rays of the sun infinitely more than the sun obscures the stars. A certain religious priest once desired to know the meaning of the verse, *His eyes are more beautiful than wine.*² And so when he was celebrating the divine mysteries there was shown to him in the sacred chalice the face of Christ, whose eyes radiated such dazzling brilliance that even if the whole world were plunged in darkness, his eyes could brighten it more than a thousand suns.

Indeed, it can scarcely be believed with what burning desire Lutgarde longed to see Christ. I myself once saw her shedding such copious tears on this account that one could scarcely bear the sight of those tears without weeping. It happened, moreover, two years before she departed this world that our Brother Bernard, coming to Aywières, found that she had been sick for a month and had received the sacrament of unction, as if prepared for death to come at any time. From her burning desire to see Christ it had become fixed in her mind that she was presently to pass over to the Lord. The friar observed in her no sign that she was about to die, and said to her in her anxious longing:

¹ Song of Songs 5:6

² Genesis 49:12

“It does not seem to me, dearest, that you are now departing this life.” With a troubled face she upbraided him: “Do not say that, my dearest. I feel such a powerful longing to contemplate Christ the Lord face to face.” And the brother said smiling: “In truth, dearest mother, it shall not be now.” Then raising her eyes to the heavens she said to him: “If it shall not be now, let his will be done tomorrow. So then I will rise out of bed and receive his body for consolation.”

How a voice sounded above her in the hearing of a nun: My delights are to be with the children of men.

3.10 One day when the soul of pious Lutgarde was more purely joined to Christ in contemplation, a voice sounded above her in the hearing of a very devout nun, saying: *My delights are to be with the children of men.*¹

(What is novel or marvelous in this? Augustine, the greatest of the contemplatives, called a devout and faithful soul *the paradise of paradises*, and rightly so. For in the creation of heaven and earth God said but a word and it was done. But in the recreation of the soul that was corrupted by the sin of Adam, who could conceive of the toil that Christ underwent throughout the thirty-three years of his life to the time of his humiliating death? I do not doubt that he endured these things as true God and true man, yet who could ever sufficiently marvel at the worth of him for whom Christ endured so much terrible suffering? And especially the worth of one who strives might and main to repay him, and does not cease to *fulfill in his flesh what is lacking in the passion of Christ*?² No one who knew her or who reads this account doubts that Lutgarde did this most zealously. So what then in our time could have been more precious to Christ the son of God than Lutgarde? If anything was, I do not know, God does. I only know I do not remember ever reading or hearing of any such. *I have believed, and therefore I have spoken.*³)

How a year before her death Christ asked only three things of her.

3.11 A little more than a year before her death the Lord Jesus Christ appeared to her with a joyful visage, and commending her he said: “The end of your labor now draws near. I do not want you to be separated from me any longer. I only ask three things of you this year. First, that you give thanks for the benefits you have received, and that you seek the intercession of the saints to aid you in this. Second, that you immerse yourself totally in prayer to the Father for my sinners. The third is that you free yourself from all other concerns and with a yearning desire long only to be united with me.”

(Consider therefore, O reader, in what favor she was held by God. At a time of life when the ancient serpent should be lurking at her heel, God occupied her mind with only three concerns.)

¹ Proverbs 8:31

² Colossians 1:24

³ Psalm 116.10 (Vulg. 115:10)

How the Lord Christ with Mary his mother appeared to her at Eastertime before her death and foretold her death to her.

3.12 On the final Eastertide before her death, the Lord Jesus Christ and his magnificent mother appeared to her in their full radiant glory. And when Lutgarde (as almost always) was bemoaning the exile of her present life and longing for her homeland in heaven, they said to her: "You should not, dearest one, trouble yourself further about this now. The solace of eternal peace is now being prepared for you as a crown, nor do we want you to wait any longer."

(As soon as she received this revelation from the Lord, with the greatest fear and exultation she announced it to the oft-mentioned Sybil de Gages, for she had no closer or dearer friend in all things. And rightly so, because following the precept of the venerable Jacques, she was guided in all things by the counsel of this Sybil, as she was more learned.)

How fifteen days before her death there appeared to her the blessed Virgin Mary and blessed John the Baptist and certain of her close friends who were then departed, foretelling her death; and her glorious answer when asked how she was able to recognize and identify the saints who appeared to her in great number.

3.13 Fifteen days before her death there appeared to her the glorious Virgin Mary and most blessed John the Baptist, whom she loved with a most special love, and they said to her: "Your consummation is now at hand; a crown of justice is laid up for you. We do not wish you to remain here longer, for all the citizens of heaven await you."

The saints also often appeared to her that year in great numbers and foretold to her the departure that was quickly approaching. There appeared to her as well certain of her closest friends who had gone before her, grandly proclaiming their joy that she would soon change her habitation and join their company.

When she told this to some of her friends, they asked her how she was able to distinguish among the saints. And she said: "From Christ himself, the saint of saints, there emanates a brightness that illuminates my soul, and in this brightness I perfectly recognize each one of the saints who appears to me."

(Note, reader, that I understand this brightness to be nothing other than the mirror of the Trinity or of eternity. For just as the book of Wisdom says in the seventh chapter: *She is the brightness of eternal light, and the unspotted mirror of God's majesty, and the image of his goodness. And being but one, she can do all things: and remaining in herself the same, she renews all things, and through generations conveys herself into holy souls, and makes them friends of God and prophets.*)¹

She therefore beseeched those saints who appeared to her to give thanks to God for her and for all the blessings he had bestowed on her.

¹ Wisdom 7:26-27

How she reproved the sisters in the infirmary and foretold that after her death the Lord would punish them, and how this came to pass.

3.14 She had frequently rebuked the nuns in the infirmary for being lax and inattentive in performing the canonical hours ordained by God. And when half a year before her death she did not see the nuns fully correct themselves in showing due reverence to God, she said: "I know that after my death the hand of the Lord will avenge this failing in the sisters. Then taking thought of my words and the whip, they will be humbly chastened, and the Lord will quickly draw back the hand he stretched out for vengeance." There is none who could doubt with how true a spirit she prophesied these things. For immediately following Lutgarde's blessed death, a grave pestilence ravaged the convent, and in the span of a very short time fourteen highly esteemed nuns perished. (Indeed, I myself came to Aywières at this time. Two sisters of the flesh and spirit departed life in a single moment, and I celebrated Mass for them and buried them in a single tomb.) Directly after this, when the invalids in the infirmary had fully corrected themselves in punctiliously saying their hours, the Lord in his mercy withdrew his hand, just as Lutgarde had predicted, and the pestilence quickly ceased.

(So then I ask you, O dames and sisters of Aywières, that you strive to observe all the precepts of pious Lutgarde and closely follow in the footsteps of her example, and I hope that through her prayers you attain the palm of victory, and will find instruction in the following tale.)

How one of her secular friends had gravely sinned and was granted indulgence through her prayers, and how on her account the Lord blessed not only him, but all whom she loved and who loved her and placed their hope in her.

3.15 One of her close friends, a layman, had committed a grave sin. After making his confession he did penance for the sin, but it was not granted him to feel the comfort of forgiveness in prayer. And so he was close to falling into a pit of utter despair. Coming then to pious Lutgarde, as if to his own mother, with great sorrow he told her the sin he had committed and the penance he underwent for it. And though she said a prayer for the sinner once, twice, even a third time, she did not receive the usual response from the Lord and the man felt as miserable as before. When Lutgarde saw this, she wrestled with the Lord in prayer with remarkable tenacity of spirit. Finally then, when she was unable to overcome the Lord, who in his wrath was withholding his mercies, she said: "Either remove me from the book of life or free him of this guilt!" When she said this the Lord was at once persuaded to show mercy and said: "Lo, I have forgiven him because he has had faith in you. I will bless not only him on your account, but all who have hope in you and are loved by you." Immediately upon these words of God the man fully received the hope of pardon, and through the mercy of the Lord arrived at a state of even greater peace and happiness than before his lapse into sin.

How she died and what she did in death; how she said there was a celestial army in the cloister when death entered.

3.16 So then the day arrived, for her a day of praise and exultation, but for me, and those who lived under her comforting protection, a day of mourning, of groans and lamentation; a day, I say, that I, most wretched man of all, was unable to forestall by my own death, as I had often begged her, nor could I follow closely after, sadder in my abandonment than any orphan.

It was the eve of the octave of the holy and inseparable Trinity, when this inseparable worshiper of the Triune God took to bed with a quite severe but slow fever and was beset by a worsening illness. On the following Monday, there came to visit her a lay brother of Afflighem, a monastery especially dear to her because of the piety of the brothers' devotion. In the course of their conversation, he said: "Would that our abbot knew that you were so gravely ill!" And she replied: "That beloved man will come to see me tomorrow." This answer surprised the monk, for he thought it inconceivable, but he held his peace.¹

And when morning came, as the venerable abbot was passing by the monastery at a distance of two miles, and was completely unaware that Lutgarde was ill, he said to those who were with him: "Let us go visit Dame Lutgarde, for much time has passed since I last saw her." He therefore came to Aywières, and when he went in to see her she was filled with the purest joy. She raised herself from the bed and sat down, and holding his hand she said: "I am now departing, dearest one, and I leave no one under heaven dearer to me than you. And I want you to know that the Lord has consoled me concerning you."

The abbot then had to depart to attend to other matters, and until Thursday she remained in the happiest of spirits. And so then on Thursday, when she heard the sound of Sybil de Gages entering, she said to her: "Sit here next to my heart. Look, the cloister is filled with a heavenly army. The souls of the blessed are here, and many of our sisters who have gone before us from this world." Saying this she fell silent, and thenceforth through all of Friday she remained rapt in the spirit, contemplating God alone with a beatific expression on her face. On Saturday, when the moment of death was at hand, she opened her eyes to the sky, and having been fortified by the holy sacraments, her happy soul flew off to heaven, rejoicing in the open air with the princes of the heavenly host, amid singers and young maidens playing tambourines.²

It was the year of the incarnation of the Lord 1246, on the sixteenth day of the month of June, in the fourth indiction, in the sixty-fourth year of her life, around the hour of vespers, in the reign of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom is the honor and the glory with the Father and the Holy Spirit, world without end. Amen.

How she opened her eyes before her death and did not shut them afterwards; what certain sisters experienced at her death; how her face appeared in death and after.

¹ The two monasteries were 35 miles apart.

² Psalm 68:25 (Vulg. 67.26) *Princes went before joined with singers, in the midst of young damsels playing on timbrels.* (Douay-Rheims)

3.17 But when pious Lutgarde breathed her last, some of the nuns, who were granted this splendid gift by God, were filled with such joy and sweetness of spirit that they could not contain their astonishment. They felt with absolute certainty that Jesus himself, the prince of our salvation, in very presence had called away her soul to the delights of paradise, to the immense joy of the heavenly host.

Moreover, it is a natural feature of the dying that they turn a pallid, purplish color in death, but the face of pious Lutgarde, as a sign of her virginal innocence, displayed the shining whiteness of a lily. Shortly before the moment of death, her eyes that had long been shut were opened to the sky, nor was it possible to shut them after death, for the direction of her gaze showed the path that her spirit had traveled. Moreover, those who handled her body found her skin to be of such smoothness that when they stroked it, it felt for all the world like sleek white silk.

How a certain sister had a withered hand, which was healed by touching the body of Lutgarde when it was being bathed.

3.18 While washing Lutgarde's sacred corpse, a certain sister who many years before had completely lost the use of a hand, touched the body with it, not intentionally but by chance, and suddenly the hand was fully restored and made whole again.

(Behold how quickly and clearly the words of the prophecy of Marie d'Oignies were fulfilled, which we reported earlier. When dying she predicted of Lutgarde: "She now performs spiritual miracles in life; after death she shall perform physical ones." It was worthy indeed, and truly most worthy, that the God whom Lutgarde in life proclaimed marvelous in his saints, should display by clear signs that Lutgarde was marvelous even after her death.)

How she had foretold many years in advance that her little finger would suffice me after her death, though I had longed to have her hand, and how this was miraculously accomplished.

3.19 Many years before her death, I had fervently asked a number of nuns and lay brothers that if it happened—as, alas, it did—I was not present at the death of Mother Lutgarde, they would cut off her hand and save it for me, as a token of her sacred memory, and in this matter I had gained the consent of the abbess of the convent, the venerable Hawide. But as it is the nature of women to be unable to keep secret even matters requiring the greatest secrecy, the nuns informed Lutgarde about the arrangements I had made for the cutting off of her hand. Not long after, when I came to Aywières and was speaking with her, she looked at me intently and said, "I have heard, dearest son, that you are now planning to cut off my hand after I die, and I very much wonder what it is you intend to do with it." At this I blushed deeply and said, "If I obtain your hand as I am planning, I believe it will be for the good of both my body and soul." She then placed the little finger of her right hand on the sill of the window at which we were speaking, and smiling serenely she said, "You will be content after my death to have this finger." Then growing bolder I answered, "No part of your body will suffice to console me for your loss, save your head or your hand." After this exchange we turned

to other matters, and saying nothing about it to anyone, I gave it no further thought or notice.

It happened then that when she died and her body had not yet been carried to the church but still lay in the infirmary, a devout young lay brother named Guido and a companion of his were planning to cut off the hand of pious Lutgarde. Not daring, though, to perform so bold an act, they instead amputated that finger of her right hand that she had said would suffice me, and they extracted sixteen teeth from her mouth. When her death had been made known and I heard of the amputated finger, not knowing which finger it was, I said, "Now I shall have clear proof whether Lutgarde was truly a prophetess, for she predicted many years before that the little finger of her right hand could suffice me." So then I came to Aywières and discovered that the amputated finger was the very one she had foretold, and I thought that it was indeed sufficient and that I would be completely content if it was granted me to attain it.

I therefore approached the abbess about the matter and implored her with earnest prayers mixed with tears, but to my great sorrow I found her alone unable to be swayed. Yet I believe that this was part of the heavenly plan. For the Almighty wanted to demonstrate that it was in fulfillment of the promise of pious Lutgarde that I obtained her finger, which my simple ignorance had earlier refused. So then later I came a second time to Aywières, and promising that I would write the life of pious Lutgarde, with deep and heart-felt joy I received the gift I prized above gold and silver.

And let no envier carp at me and think me deserving of condemnation for cherishing with such ardor the finger of Lutgarde, who has not yet been canonized. For the most blessed Natalia cut off the arm of Adrian soon after he was martyred. And though Marie d'Oignies had not been canonized, Cardinal Jacques of the Roman Curia wore her severed finger around his neck for many years, and later presented it to Pope Gregory IX to wear as if it were the most precious of gifts, to protect him against the spirit of blasphemy which sorely afflicted him. And in our own time the thumb and forefinger of Elizabeth of Hungary were cut off soon after her death. And that which was done before me by St. Natalia and the memorable Cardinal Jacques and Pope Gregory and many other honorable persons of great authority, no one will judge when done by me to be stupid and impious, unless he himself is clearly stupid and impious.

How her body was buried.

3.20 Afterward, when her sacred body was lying on a bier awaiting burial, the question arose of where such holy and distinguished remains should be laid to rest. And it happened by divine providence that the venerable Abbot of Aulne, the visiting priest of that monastery in accordance with the rules of the order, had arrived three days before the burial of Lutgarde and had been anxiously awaiting its conclusion. Therefore when the question was raised of where it was proper to bury so precious a treasure, the abbot replied: "Where else but in the church, where she can be visited by all in a manner worthy of her." This was an entirely worthy and provident response, and it accorded with what she herself in life had foretold. For when her closest friends among the sisters

had asked her what they should do when she died, deprived as they would be by the aid of her prayers, she answered: "Seek refuge at my tomb. There I will aid you in death just as I have in life." With how true and prophetic a spirit she said this, no one, I am sure, is now unaware, who has invoked her aid with a faithful heart. And where better could this be done than in the special place where she used to cling fast to God in prayer and contemplation? Therefore the words of the abbot won the assent of all, and on the right side of the choir, next to the wall where she used to pray, in a holy and honored place she was laid to rest. Sybil de Gages composed the following verses by way of an epitaph.¹

Lutgarde's light has ceased to shine.
Her life was one of innocence,
And now with Christ her soul abides.
Her body rests beneath this stone.

With hunger and with aching thirst
For things divine she grieving yearned.
Pure light of day, the Bridegroom's face,
Has now at last upon her shone.

The flower of the nunnery,
Life's looking glass, the sisters' jewel:
For mercy and for piety
and noble ways her fame was known.

How she appeared to a certain nun and told her that she had passed into heaven without suffering purgatory, and had freed many souls from purgatory; and how she foretold that another nun would die, and she died immediately afterward.

3.21 Immediately after her burial she appeared to Elizabeth de Wans, a nun of Aywières who had once been the abbess of St. Didier's in Champagne. As she appeared before her in great glory, Elizabeth questioned her, saying, "O sweetest mistress, did you suffer purgatory for any length of time?" And she replied, "Not only did I pass to my rest without suffering purgatory, but when I passed purgatory I felt compassion for the suffering souls and blessed them, and many of the souls were released from their punishment by the kindness of God and I led them with me to the beauty of paradise."

After she said this, Elizabeth seemed to hear Lutgarde say to a certain young nun named Matilde, who was still alive: "Follow me." Elizabeth understood this to mean that the young woman was to follow Lutgarde in death. Elizabeth offered to follow her too, saying: "May I be permitted to follow you as well, sweetest Mother?" And Lutgarde said, "You cannot follow me now, but later you will follow me as a daughter her mother." This vision was quickly fulfilled when the young woman who had been invited by

¹ Sybil's epitaph consists of three couplets, the first in elegiacs and the other two in dactylic hexameter. They all employ rhyme but in different places in the verse.

Lutgarde to follow her died within nine days, but Elizabeth, who had offered to follow but to whom it was not granted, is alive to this day.

How in a vision a certain nun saw her end a pestilence that had visited the convent in accordance with her prophecy.

3.22 Moreover, when in fulfillment of a prophecy of Lutgarde a deadly pestilence was raging among the nuns of Aywières, one of the nuns saw in a vision a large mob insolently attacking the monastery church. As there was no one who was able to put a stop to their insolence, she saw Lutgarde rise from the tomb and drive them all from the church with the greatest violence. Immediately the outcome of this blessed vision was achieved, and the monastery of Aywières was freed from the insolence of the deadly contagion.

How the noble girl Beatrice was healed with her veil.

3.23 All the nuns quickly ransacked whatever they could find of her belts, robes, veils and similar things to serve as relics, and truly the greatest of relics. The most noble Beatrice de Rave, a young nun who with great generosity had used her inheritance to relieve the monastery of its poverty, had an ulcer on her neck which physicians call a carbuncle. She placed a veil from the head of Lutgarde around her neck and immediately the dangerous swelling was seen to vanish.

(It was indeed altogether proper and just, O pious Lutgarde, that she who aided you materially in life should be rewarded by you spiritually after your death.)

How the chaplain Dom Alard was healed.

3.24 Dom Alard, for many years chaplain of Aywières, when a swollen thumb was causing him great torment, bound the thumb with a relic of Lutgarde and quickly found this to be a remedy for the pain and swelling.

How the subprioress Oda was healed.

3.25 Oda the subprioress of Aywières, when she was sorely afflicted with a swollen hand, wrapped it with a relic of Lutgarde and immediately experienced a complete return to health.

How a certain nun demonstrated the power of Lutgarde through the lilies placed at her tomb.

3.26 My kinswoman of the same name, a nun born in the town of Braine, had long been troubled by an infirmity of the head and was completely unable to abide the smell of lilies. When she saw that lilies had been placed at the tomb of Lutgarde, she shuddered at the very sight of them. But after putting only her head in the door to see if it was safe to enter, and noticing no ill effects, she then stepped inside with more confidence and went up to the tomb. Lifting the lilies to her nose she felt no pain in her head at all.

This same nun, when one night in the dark she was prostrating herself at Lutgarde's sepulcher to pray, struck her eye on the sharp iron point of a candlestick. She felt that her eyeball had been dislodged and quickly put her hand over the eye to prevent it from falling out entirely. The pain was so intolerable she said: "O holy Mother Lutgarde, what has happened to me? Bowing to the ground in reverence for you I have lost my eye, which you should have protected. I return with an injury from the very place I was expecting to be healed." Saying this she arose, and in a very short time she was completely restored to health and experienced no faintness or pain.

How Marie d'Andenne was suddenly cured of a powerful headache by her veil.

3.27 Marie d'Andenne, a nun of Aywières, once was suffering from a headache so severe that her limbs could not remain still even for a moment and she began rolling wildly on the ground. To the wonderment of all, who thought she had suddenly lost her senses, she was immediately and visibly cured by Lutgarde's veil, and so thoroughly that she no longer felt any pain at all.

How a certain matron undergoing a dangerous labor was delivered by Lutgarde's belt, and how many other women experienced the same thing.

3.28 When a certain noble matron was undergoing a very long and dangerous labor, there was brought to her a belt made of horsehair which Lutgarde used to wear against her skin to mortify her body. The woman placed this upon her womb and to the amazement of all she was safely delivered of a healthy child without any accompanying pain. This same procedure proved to be efficacious for various other women in various places.

Finis Vitae S. Lutgardis

Vita S. Lutgardis

Auctore Thoma Cantipratano

Prologus

Dominae reverendae, et in Christo plurimum diligendae Hawidi, concessione divina in Aquiria abbatissae, totique cum ea sanctissimo conventui, frater officio supprior, sed Fratrum Praedicatorum minimus, salutem; et bene hoc, quod sibi.

Officium personae et ordinis, et si non nomen proprium, in salutatione posui, ut scilicet auctoritas in officio et ordine commendetur, nec tamen opus sequens nominis insinuatione vilescat. Sicut me non solum vestra, immo multorum monasteriorum caritas, et amor quem specialissimum erga personam habebam flagrantissimus incitavit, vitam piaae Lutgardis utcumque descripsi, tribus libris opus omne distinguens secundum triplicem statum in anima: inchoantium, proficientium, et perfectorum. Primus quidem, quomodo in ordine S. Benedicti conversionis sanctimoniam inchoavit; secundus, quomodo ad Cisterciensem Ordinem transeundo profecit; quid autem annis undecim ante mortem et in morte et post mortem per eam Dominus dignatus est operari, quasi perfectionis gradum, liber tertius obtinebit et continebit.

Nec credo vitam alicujus, quae tot virtutum insignia et mirabilium ac miraculorum praerogativas in se contineat, a multis retroactis annis fuisse descriptam. Si autem quaeritur quomodo legentibus fidem faciam de iis omnibus quae conscripsi, breviter dico, quod ipse Christus testis et iudex sit, quod plurima ex iis ab ore ipsius piaae Lutgardis, sicut familiarissimus ejus, accepi, et in iis nullum ita temerarium credo qui ejus testimoniis contradicat. Cetera vero a talibus me percepisse profiteor qui nequaquam a veritatis tramite deviant. Pleraque etiam, et revera magnifica, scribere non consensi, vel quia non intelligibilia rudibus essent, vel quia testimonium conveniens non inveni.

Cum ergo *caritas omnia credit, omnia sustinet*,¹ peto ab iis quibus Deus spiritum suae caritatis infudit ut credant his, siqua sunt sancta, siqua utilia, siqua veritati consona proponuntur; simulque sustineant patienter siqua minus apte, siqua minus litteratorie vel indiscrete posuero: quae tamen propter haec minus debite ab improbis repelluntur. *Bonorum enim ingeniorum*, ut dicit gloriosissimus Augustinus, *insignis est indoles, in verbis verum amare, non verba*.² Neque enim aurum minus pretiosum est quod de terra tollitur, neque vinum minus sapidum quod de vilibus lignis excipitur. Ergo non solum vos sed omnium monasteriorum Brabantiae coetus virginum Vitam piaae Lutgardis suscipiant, ut quae in fama virtutis notissima omnibus fuit, ipsa

¹ 1 Corinthians 13:7

² Augustine, *De Doctrina Christiana* 4.11.26

brevi¹ libelli hujus insinuatione plenius innotescat, augeatque legentibus virtutem et meritum, quibus praescriptum aderit virtutis exemplum.

Valeat vestra sancta et sincera benignitas, et mei vos memores in orationibus vestris divina pietas incolumes tueatur. Amen.

Liber I

Caput I

De ortu et infantia ejus.

1.1 Pia Lutgardis virgo ex illa quondam famosissima civitate Tungrensi, matre nobili, patre cive, originem duxit. Pater itaque tenerrime filiam diligens, et secundum fastum seculi eam cupiens prosperari, viginti marcas argenti, cum illa adhuc esset infantula, cuidam credidit mercatori, ut ex iis medio tempore, quo parvula cresceret, multiplicatis copiis paraphernalia nupturae filiae in dotibus augerentur. Puella autem crescens et quid pro se fiebat agnoscens, prout talis aetas velle poterat, ad conjugium inhiabat. Sed pius Dominus, providus futurorum, qui *vocat ea quae non sunt tamquam ea quae sunt*,² frustrato patris consilio, de Lutgarde sponsanda sibi aliter disponebat. Ille enim qui deputatam Lutgardi pecuniam per mercationes susceperat ampliandam, frequenter in Angliam transiens et per infortunia diversa dissiliens, usque ad unam marcam viginti marcas totaliter dissipavit.

Nec ista tamen intentionem patris aut effrontem impudentiam filiae a proposito revocassent, nisi pia matris instantia mentem filiae modo minis, modo blanditiis evicisset. Dicebat enim mater filiae et hoc saepius inculcabat: Si nubere Christo volueris, monasterium tibi, ubicumque volueris, honestissimum praeparabo; si vero virum mortalem elegeris, nullum alium nisi vaccarum custodem habebis. His ergo et hujusmodi verbis illa praeclara mulier et viri votum et filiae voluntatem ad melioris conditionis propositum inclinavit.

Fuit tamen in ornatu vestium quamdiu degit apud patrem, sed jocos inhonestos fugit et amatorias confabulationes et ineptias penitus puellares; et mirum in modum, cum necdum cognosceret Dominum (nec enim ei tunc in aliquo fuerat revelatus), in corde tamen cum sola esset, sentiebat interius nescio quid divini. Et revera ex tunc sibi templum habitationis suae dignissimum in Lutgarde Dominus praeparabat. Obtinuit ergo cum gratia divina jus maternum in filia, et annorum paulo plus quam duodecim aetate adepta, in monasterio S. Catharinae juxta oppidum S. Trudonis in Hasbania, inter moniales Ordinis S. Benedicti, divino servitio mancipatur.

Quomodo procata est a quodam juvene et per visionem Christi conversa penitus et subito liberata.

1.2 Quam cum juvenis divitiis pollens et genere procaretur, animum interdum coepit verbis illius leniter inclinare. Cumque tempus et locum juvenis observaret, clam de nocte domum in

¹ AS brevi RV brevis

² Romans 4.17

qua virgo jacebat adire tentabat. Nec mora, cum accessisset, repentino timore correptus aufugit. Institit ergo diabolus miris modis ut ad consensum puellarem animum inclinaret; sed frustra, quia Omnipotens non permisit. Cumque ad colloquium juvenis simplex puella quandoque sederet, apparuit ipsi Christus in ipsa humanitatis forma, qua inter homines quondam fuerat conversatus; et pectori vestem detrahens qua videbatur obtectus, vulnus lateris ostendit quasi recenti sanguine cruentatum, dicens: Blanditias inepti amoris ulterius non requiras. Hic jugiter contemplare quid diligas et cur diligas. Hic totius puritatis delicias tibi spondeo consequendas.

Quomodo quaedam devota et nobilis matrona praedixit eam quasi alteram Agnetem futuram.

1.3 Tali igitur Lutgardis oraculo pavefacta, statim oculis cordis haesit quid vidisset excipere; et quasi columba meditans in fenestra ad introitum solaris luminis, ostium crystallinum arcae, typici corporis Christi, pertinaciter observabat. Mox flore carnis abeso, vultu palluit, ut omnis amans, et superno interius splendore lustrata, totius vanitatis se sensit amisisse caliginem. Quam dum die quadam matrona quaedam nobilis et devota vidisset, spiritu prophetiae intulit quod subjungo: Tu, inquit, ut video, bona Agnes, et vere Agnes altera eris. Nec mora, venit juvenis et de proposito sermone coepit replicare sermonem. Cui illa ut quondam Agnes beatissima hianti ore respondit: *Discede a me, pabulum mortis, nutrimentum facinoris, quoniam ab alio amatore praeventa sum.*¹

Quomodo miles quidam eam procabatur, et ipsa viriliter repulit eum et confudit.

1.4 Sed et alius quidam juvenis, in armis miles strenuus, Lutgardem Deo jam sincerius inhaerentem nihilominus adamavit. Hic cum multis jam annis renitentem animo procaretur, illa eum decenter primo, et postmodum serius avertebat. Cumque videret militem in stultitia pertinacem, ab ea illo in tempore contumeliosis sermonibus est repulsus.

Quomodo miles idem voluit eam violenter rapere, et ipsa miraculose evasit.

1.5 Despectum ergo se dolens, miles quid facere possit excogitat, et accidit quod Lutgardis, a sorore sua per nuntios accersita, iter arriperet. Cui juvenis obviis cum turba satellitum eam rapere nitebatur. Mox puella, equo quo sedebat exsiliens, a manibus se juvenis violenter extorsit et tota nocte fugiens per ignota silvarum, angelico ductu ad domum nutricis mane pervenit. Quam ut nutrix vidit, suspicata raptum, dixit: Numquid te juvenis ille hac nocte violenter oppressit? Cui illa: Non, inquit. Nec mirum si nutrix hoc suspicabatur, ut diximus. Servi enim ejus, ut viderunt praecedenti vespere juvenem super se cum manu valida venientem, fugerunt, et ut in talibus mos est, inclamaverunt juvenem ut raptorem. Et ille voce clamantium pavefactus, cessavit a persecutione virginis et aufugit. Occasione igitur hujus clamoris et fugae, in suspicionem hominum innocens puella devenit.

Quomodo praedixit satelliti militis saevientis² in eam gravissimum infortunium.

1.6 In hoc autem eventu quiddam factum est quod nequaquam est silentio pertranseundum. Satelles quidam, cum ad rapiendum miles equo eminens descendisset, in tenendo equo

¹ Ambrose, *Vita Sanctae Agnetis* 1.3 (Acta Sanctorum Januarii Tomus II p. 350 (1736))

² AS saevienti

obsequium familiare praestabat. Hunc virgo Lutgardis, frustratis viribus militis, animo pertinacem inspiciens, non tam imprecata quam praevidens inclamavit: Manu, inquit, qua lora equi tenes militis infestantis, opera in proximo facies quibus in hoc seculo temporaliter confundaris. Vide ergo lector, quam cito hoc sit et veraciter insecutum. Rediens enim domum, manu illa qua frenum tenuerat uxorem propriam mox occidit, et propter hoc expulsus de patria, bonis omnibus est privatus.

Quomodo confusioni restitit quando apud S. Trudonem obuius ei fuit populus revertenti.

1.7 Nec multo post rediens a sorore, in oppidum S. Trudonis eques cum famulis veniebat. Concursu ergo populi curiosius glomerata, ibi immenso coepit erubescendae pondere fatigari, statimque Christum reduxit ad mentem, et fortiter animo imperans, mox velum a facie manu injecta dimovit, Christo sic inquit: Pro nobis, innocentissime omnium Domine, pro nobis, pulcherrime, vestibus spoliatus ad columnam ligatus es, et in derisionem furentis populi chlamyde purpurea indutus et serto spineo coronatus, nudus in patibulo pependisti. Nihil ergo inueniens quod rependam, pudorem istum tibi offero pro te spretum. Mira res! Vix verba complevit, et in revelatione faciei ejus confusa populi multitudo discessit.

Ipsa vero ad monasterium rediens, in bonis potioribus Domini ab illa die et deinceps proficiens exultavit.

Fratri quidem Bernardo, fratri Ordinis Praedicatorum et poenitentiario Domini Papae, non utique sicut mihi, quia digniori et magis ad capiendum idoneo spiritu, cuncta cordis sui secreta totaliter revelavit. Credo tamen quod non minus totaliter, et si minus digno, mihi hoc dixit, et ipse consentio, quod ante diu Dominum rogaverat ut ei aliquando mitteret confusionem, in qua posset Passionis Dominicae confusionem praesentialiter imitari.

Quomodo B. Virgo consolata est eam, quando timuit in verbis quibusdam monialium.

1.8 Hinc igitur ab omni fere locutione et consolatione hominum sequestrata, tota caelestibus inhiabat. Cumque nonnullae aemulae arctiorem ejus vitam carperent, quam non poterant imitari, dixerunt: Sinite eam adhuc, dum fervor in cursu est. Postea videbitis, cum tepuerit, illam cum rubore repetere quae nunc stulta contemnit. Haec cum Lutgardis audiret, coepit humiliter de se ipsa pavere, et an forte futura essent quae aetate provectiores de ea dicerent cum gemitu formidare. Cui B. Maria Virgo in vultu congratulantis apparens: Non, inquit, dilectissima filia, non ita erit ut metuis, nec paveas recidivum. Mea te sollicitudine protegente firmaberis in salutem, nec minuetur in te virtutis actus aut gratia, sed de die in diem semper cumulabitur tibi ad coronam.

Praeclara utique et ineffabiliter amplexenda promissio. Verumtamen dum ipsa in oratione aut contemplatione Domino dulciter jungeretur, et eam aliquod urgens negotium evocaret, quasi amico familiariter loqueretur, Domino cum magna simplicitate et cordis puritate dicebat: Domine Jesu, expecta me hic. Jam cito expedita revertar ad te. Mira demulcentis simplicitas! Mira Redemptoris clementia circa eam! Paratum enim eum illi in omni loco dominationis ejus, paratum in omni negotio comprobavit.

Quomodo B. Catharina apparuit ei.

1.9 Sub eodem fere tempore beatissima virgo Catharina, protectrix ipsius monasterii et patrona, apparuit in maxima gloria claritatis flenti pariter et oranti. Cui cum pavidissime supplicaret ut pro se Dominum exoraret, respondit B. Catharina et dixit: Confide, filia, quia semper in te gratiam augebit Omnipotens, donec per summum vitae fastigium meritum inter virgines potissimum consequaris.

Haec mihi sicut et alia plurima ipsamet ante mortem, sacramento a me constricta, narravit. Ut autem in ore duorum testium verbum subsisteret veritatis, cuidam beatissimae feminae B. Catharina apparuit, dicens: Lutgardem interventricem tibi quaeras et matrem. Quae ab omnipotente Domino par mihi meritum in caelo obtinebit et locum.

Videte ergo, o vos Aquiriae moniales, quanti inter vos meriti quadraginta annis mulier habitavit: quantum per eam profeceritis cernite. Si dignam ei omnes reverentiam impendistis, diligentius pertractate. Certus sum enim quod honorantibus meritum, negligentibus, si doluerint, veniam impetrabit.

Quomodo visa est a toto conventu in aëre suspendi.

1.10 Ut ergo majora horum de ea credi pariter possint et probari, miraculum gloriosissimum notum¹ pluribus enarrabo. In sancto die Pentecostes cum in choro a monialibus *Veni Creator Spiritus* cantaretur, ab his quae in choro erant manifestissime visum est Lutgardem ad duos cubitos a terra in aëre sublimari. Nec mirum si corpus a terra ad caelum suspensum sit, cujus anima mundo jam effecta sublimior, caelum secundum promissum Domini possidebat. *Omnis*, inquit, *locus quem calcaverit pes vester, vester erit.*² Pede utique affectus caelum sine spatio illocalem calcavit, quod ideo caelibus mente calcatum, etiam corporis gestu pro sua possibilitate suscepit. Felix ergo Lutgardis per tantum miraculum, cujus corpus et anima exultaverunt in Deum vivum.

Quomodo claritas solaris visa est de nocte ad eam descendere.

1.11 Nec non et istud solemniissimum fuit miraculum quod subjungo. Perfectius, secundum quod ei promissum a matre Domini fuerat, de die in diem semetipsam Domino in holocaustum gratuitum dedit, corpus affligens jejuniis et ab oratione spiritum non relaxans. Ne autem in cordibus sororum quae aemulari eam aliquantulum videbantur suspicionis alicujus scrupulus remaneret, Christus sponsam suam hujusmodi miraculo decoravit. Lutgarde ergo crebrius continuante vigiliis, accidit una nocte ut super eam a monialibus super solis splendorem per magnum spatium noctis jubar luminis videretur. Quod utique lumen transfusum interius non solum in ipsam, sed et in illas quae viderunt illud, spiritualis vitae gratiam augmentavit.

Quomodo Dominus compatiens infirmis dedit ei gratiam sanitatum, et postea ut intelligeret Psalterium, et postea ut perditis istis gratiam Dei quoad viveret impetravit.

1.12 Spiritu pietatis super infirmos et debiles mirabiliter movebatur, adeo ut cum afflictis ipsa magis in spiritu torqueretur. Dedit ergo ei Deus ita universaliter gratiam curationum, ut si esset macula in oculo aut malum aliud in manu, pede vel membris aliis, ad contactum salivae vel

¹ AS votum RV notum

² Deuteronomy 11:24

manus illius protinus curabantur. Cumque in hac gratia multitudine hominum obrueretur qui eam in oratione saepius impedirent, dixit Domino: Quid mihi, Domine, ista gratia, per quam a vacando tibi frequenter impedior? Aufer eam a me, ita tamen ut mihi in melius gratia commutetur. Et Dominus: Quid vis, ait, ut pro hac gratia detur tibi? Et illa: Volo, inquit, ut ad maiorem devotionem Psalterium per quod orem intelligam. Et factum est ita. Nam ut illo in tempore probatum est, Psalterium tanto lucidius intellexit quanto radiantiori lumine fuerat illustrata. Post haec cum nondum se tantum quantum putaverat in hac gratia proficere comperisset (reverentia enim velati mysterii mater est devotionis, et res celata avidius quaeritur, et venerabilius absconsa conspicitur), dixit Domino: Quid mihi idiotae et rusticae et laicae moniali Scripturae secreta cognoscere? Cui Dominus: Quid vis? Volo, inquit, cor tuum. Et Dominus: Quin ego potius et cor tuum volo. Cui illa: Ita sit Domine, sed tamen sic ut cordis tui amorem cordi meo contemperes et in te cor meum possideam, omni tempore tuo munimine jam securum.

Facta est ex tunc communicatio cordium; quin potius unio spiritus increati et creati per excellentiam gratiae, et hoc est quod Apostolus dicit: *Quae adhaeret Deo, unus spiritus efficitur.*¹

Attende lector, mira dicturus sum. Ab illo ergo die, sicut nutrix cum flabello infantulum custodit in cunis ne eum muscarum protervitas inquietet, ita in ostio cordis ejus Christus ad custodiam haesit ut nec tentatio carnis aut turpis saltem cogitatio mentem ejus ad momenti spatium perturbaret. Quid miri? Quid novi? Idem ille est qui dixerat ex antiquo: *Qui tangit vos, tangit pupillam oculi mei.*² Oculis plus aliis membris cavere solemus. Quid novi igitur, si animae piaae Lutgardis Christus cavit, quam pupillae sui oculi comparavit? Minus dixi quam debui. Dignior est quaelibet anima fidelis oculo corporis Christi, cujus oculus moriens caligavit, et totum corpus pro anima in redemptionis piaculum obtulit.

Quomodo in aliquo tribulata rapiebatur in spiritu, et sugebat de latere Domini mirabilem dulcedinem.

1.13 Sub eodem fere tempore, cum esset adhuc corpore et aetate tenerrima, nocte quadam circa matutinarum tempus sudor eam³ vehemens et naturalis invasit. Disponente ergo ea in corde a matutinis quiescere, ut postea in Dei servitio fortior esset (nimirum cum corpori suo utilem duceret esse sudorem illum), subita ad eam vox hujusmodi inclamavit: Surge cito! Quid jaces? Oportet te modo pro peccatoribus qui in suis jacent sordibus poenitentiam agere, non indulgere sudori. At illa ad vocem hujusmodi pavefacta, cito surrexit et inchoatis jam matutinis ad ecclesiam festinavit. Nec mora, in ipso ostio ecclesiae ei Christus cruci affixus cruentatus occurrit, deponensque brachium cruci affixum, amplexatus est occurrentem et os ejus vulneri dextri lateris applicavit, ubi tantum dulcedinis hausit quod semper ex tunc in Dei servitio robustior et alacrior fuit.

¹ 1 Corinthios 6:17

² Zechariah 2:8

³ AS tam RV eam

Referebant qui hoc,¹ illa revelante, illo in tempore et diu postea probaverunt, quod saliva oris ejus super omnem mellis dulcorem suavius sapiebat. Quid miri? *Favus distillans labia tua, sponsa;*² et mel divinitatis et lac humanitatis Christi, etiam tacente lingua, cor interius ruminabat.

Caput II

Quomodo Christus sibi apparuit in cruce affixus, et ipsa osculata est vulnus ejus.

1.14 Cum aliquo incommodo cordis aut corporis gravaretur, stabat ante imaginem Crucifixi, et cum diu fixis oculis imaginem inspexisset, clausis oculis et resolutis in terram membris, instar Danielis viri desideriorum³ super pedes suos stare non poterat, sed elanguens prorsus rapiebatur in spiritu et videbat Christum cum vulnere lateris cruentato, et exinde tantam dulcedinem appposito cordis ore sugebat ut in nullo posset penitus tribulari. Unde aliquando accidit ut acutissima febre laborans, statim ubi die debito criticavit, de lecto surgens sine omni difficultate conventum et chorum ad cantandum intraret.

Quomodo apparuit ei Joannes Evangelista in modum aquilae, et quid illi ostensum sit per illam aquilam.

1.15 Proinde ad recordationem illius acutissimae visionis aquilae, Joannis scilicet Evangelistae, qui fluentia Evangelii de ipso sacro Dominici pectoris fonte potavit, apparuit ei in spiritu aquila, tanto pennarum nitore refulgens ut totus potuisset orbis illius claritatis radiis illustrari. Ad visionem ergo illius super id quod dici potest admiratione nimia stupefacta, praestolabatur ut Dominus secundum capacitatem debilis aciei tanti speculationis gloriam temperaret. Et factum est ita. Visionis ergo modum moderatius contemplata, vidit quod aquila ori suo rostrum imponeret et animam ejus tam ineffabilis luminis coruscatione repletet, ut secundum id quod viventibus possibile est (quia Moysi dictum est: *Non videbit me homo et vivet*),⁴ nulla eam divinitatis secreta laterent. Tanto enim de torrente voluptatis abundantius hausit, quanto in donis munificentior⁵ aquila vas cordis ejus extensum desiderio magis invenit.

In hoc autem ei secundum conscientiam, ut spero, non erroneam⁶ testimonium habeo: quod licet ipsa in communibus verbis rudis quodam modo et simplicissima videretur et esset, tamen numquam ab ore alicujus ita sincera, ita ardentissima, ita secundum veritatis spiritum decisa verba in spiritualis collationis secretis inveni; in tantum ut rudem me prorsus et hebetem ad intellectum verborum ejus saepissime reputarem. Loci adhuc et temporis memor, tantum me aliquando in verborum ejus subtilitate stupuisse profiteor, ut si diu me illa dulcis et ineffabilis admiratio tenuisset, aut amentem me utique aut extinctum penitus reddidisset. Sed hoc non isto in tempore de quo ad praesens scribo, sed ante mortem ejus annis ferme sedecim fuit.

¹ AS haec RV hoc

² Canticum 4:11

³ Daniel 10:11

⁴ Exodus 33:20

⁵ RV quanto in donis munificentior AS in domo, quanto magnificentior (Versio Suriana: quanto in donis munificentior)

⁶ RV consciam. . . non erroneam AS conscientiam. . . non erroneum

Quomodo videbatur ei quod manus suae oleum distillarent.

1.16 Est oppidum in Hasbania quod dicitur Los. Juxta ecclesiam hujus oppidi quaedam reclusa, pro vitae merito familiarissima pia Lutgardi, Domino serviebat. Apud istam diebus quindecim morabatur, et accidit ut post orationis contemplationem tanta spiritus dulcedine repleretur quod vocata reclusa manus suae digitos ostendebat, et eos exprimendo dicebat: Ecce soror, qualiter mecum agit Omnipotens. Quia ex superabundanti gratia repleor interius, etiam digiti mei exterius ad significandam gratiam velut oleo nunc distillant. Et haec dicens quasi ebria, et vere ebria cum gestu et tripudio mirabili per reclusorium ferebatur.

Quid miri? A sponso enim introducta in cellam vinariam invitata erat, et postquam, ut cara, comedit, id est, cum labore edit poenitentiae panem; et ut carior, bibit abundantiam gratiarum; tandem, sicut carissima, inebriata est, et ideo modum excedens desipientium spiritu¹ ineffabiliter laetabatur.

Quomodo consecrata fuit, et qualiter visa fuit corona aurea poni super caput ejus, et hoc duobus videntibus.

1.17 Proinde anhelare coepit ut ministerio consecrationis per manus episcopi uni viro Christo Domino perfectius jungeretur, et data est occasio ut moniales plurimas congregatas Dominus Huardus Leodiensis Episcopus statueret consecrare. Adducta est ergo et Lutgardis ad coetum virginum consecranda. Quarum capitibus cum dictus praesul, in signum coronae aureolae, sertum ex zonis factum innecteret, et ad Lutgardem in ordine pervenisset, cuidam viro sancto et simplici qui adstabat manifestissime visum est episcopum coronam auream maximam capiti Lutgardis imponere, et eam prae aliis singulariter honorare. Hoc cum videri ab omnibus aestimaret, quaesivit ab astante presbytero cur soli Dominae Lutgardi episcopus auream coronam imponeret. Quem presbyter rei nescius irrisit, dicens: Numquid oculos inversos habes, ut auream coronam dicas quam lineam omnes vident? Siluit ergo vir beatus et risit, et in Lutgarde meritum singulare notavit.

Sed et hinc testes duos veritas habuit, quoniam hoc idem quaedam de consecratis monialibus vidit. Mirandis plus miranda succedunt.

Quam perfecte Agnum secuta fuerit Christum.

1.18 Ex hinc Sponso suo perfectius adhaerens, sequebatur Agnum quocumque iret. Si viam Christi humilem praedicamus, sequentem Lutgardem ita humilem videas, quam numquam superbia lacessivit. Si viam paupertatis intueor, adeo pauperem Lutgardem intelligas quod nec quotidiani panis, quotidie tamen laborans manibus, alimoniam cogitaret. Si viam Christi in misericordia et pietate respiciam, misericordius aliquid Lutgarde in hac vita non vidi. Si viam Christi in tribulatione denuntiem, fatigationem Lutgardis in jejuniis et afflictionibus cogites, quam super omnes nostrae aetatis viros ac mulieres per totam vitam suam duxisse probabitur. Si viam Christi ad gloriam veneramus, Lutgardem conversatione in caelis positam, ut in praesentiarum videre est, incomparabiliter extollamus.

¹ AS spiritu RV specie

In his omnibus perfectissime Petrus, in his et Maria Magdalena Agnum secuti sunt, non tamen quocumque ivit. Lutgardis autem, cohortes virgineas sequaces habens, illa incorruptionis via Agnum secuta est qua praecessit.

Quomodo ipsi cantanti Christus visus est applaudere in specie agni.

1.19 At quoniam Lutgardem per omnia Agnum secutam diximus, videas quid Agnus rependerit. Fas enim est sponsum sponsae suae vicem rependere, sed vide quemadmodum reddidit. In monasterio S. Catharinae omni sexta feria in vespere sabbathi subsequenter, in venerationem beatissimae Virginis Mariae merito deputati, cum versus super responsorium cantabatur (cujus utique versum ob gratiam devotionis Lutgardis sola cantare solebat), videbatur ei interim dum cantaret quod Christus in specie agni super pectus suum se tali modo locaret,¹ ut unum pedem super humerum ejus dexterum, alium super sinistrum, et os suum ori illius imponeret, et sic sugendo de pectore illius mirabilis melodiae suavitatem extraheret. Nec dubitare quisquam poterat in hoc cantu divinum adesse miraculum, cum in solo versu illo vox in infinitum solito gratior audiretur; unde et corda audientium ad devotionem interim mirabiliter movebantur.

Quomodo priorissa in monasterio S. Catharinae facta est.

1.20 Praeterea, quoniam tantam lucernam latere sub modio non decebat, posita est super candelabrum ut fulgor gratiae ejus omnibus appareret. Praeposita ergo, id est priorissa, ancillarum Dei in monasterio S. Catharinae uno omnium consensu electa est et concessa; abbatissam enim habere in ipso monasterio non solebant. Sed quia gravissimam sibi in hoc factam injuriam aestimabat, mutare ex tunc locum et propositum disponebat.

Quomodo Christus manum suam mediam posuit quando violentiam passa est in osculo cujusdam abbatis in eodem monasterio; et quantum fugienda sunt oscula virorum feminis religiosis.

1.21 Medio autem tempore accidit ut abbas S. Trudonis, pater scilicet spiritualis ipsius monasterii S. Catharinae, a generali Concilio Lateranensi veniens, cum processione a monialibus exciperetur. Facta autem oratione in ecclesia, conventum totum ad capitulum evocavit et minus caute, ut² inter simplices est moris, osculum singulis dedit. Cumque ad priorissam Lutgardem ventum esset ut abbati osculum daret, illa constanter renuit. Sed omnium in joco, manibus tenta violentiamque passa, sustinuit. Sed summae benignitatis Jesus misericordiae suae manum ita mediam posuit ut nec primi motus contagium in viri osculo senserit.

Erubescat (heu!) nostri temporis³ . . . flagitiosa potius quam caeca devotio, in qua viri speciem pietatis habentes impune et sine offensa gratiae divinae et legis putant se feminas et virgines osculari. Defensionem quidem erroris sui sumunt ex⁴ dictis beatissimi Pauli Apostoli, ubi scribens Corinthiis: *Salutate*, inquit, *invicem in osculo sancto*. Quod utique non ita intelligi debet ut viri feminas, sed secundum Augustinum, viri viros et feminae feminas osculentur in osculo sanctae pacis; alioquin manifestissimam impudicitiae occasionem dedisset circumspectissimus

¹ RV inclinaret et locaret

² AS ut minus caute RV minus caute ut

³ AS *nulla lacuna indicatur*

⁴ AS in RV ex

pudicitiae praedicator. Unde alias dixit: *Ab omni specie mala abstinete vos*. An non mala species illa est ubi per contactum corporum corruptio sequitur animorum,¹ et utinam tantum² animorum ac³ non etiam corporum! Certus sum, si in consuetudinem ducatur, quod et⁴ corporum.

Si enim ab Augustino doctore omnium maximo, in Regula Canonicorum, fixus oculus prohibetur, et propter hunc quis a monastica projici societate praecipitur, quia per hujus modi quisque, etiam remotus a femina, mente corrumpitur, qualem poenam censuisset in illos qui turpitudinis incentivum concipiunt per oscula⁵ mulierum, ubi utique contactus est corporum? In libro de natura rerum Plinius dicit quod claucius piscis ex adverso inescatos mordet hamos. In quo quidem signantur illi qui ipsum fornicationis opus quasi hamum vitant, sed delectationis mollitiem quasi escam captant, et dum moechiae turpitudinem ut castitatis amatores despiciunt, per oscula tamen et illicitas contrectationes in illud quod gravius est prolabantur. Unde de talibus Paulus dixit: *Dedit eos Deus in reprobum sensum ut faciant ea quae non conveniunt*.⁶

Censeo ergo ratione veridica tales esse fornicatoribus turpiores, et per hoc blasphemus in Spiritum Sanctum, qui contra castitatem, castitatis inimici, castitatis se simulant amatores. Tu ergo virgo, sponsa utique Christi, aut amatrix quaelibet castitatis, cum Lutgarde fuge tales; flagitium abhorresce. Si quis te quasi ad sanctum osculum sollicitare voluerit, si quis manu⁷ ad sinum, ad ubera, vel ad partes reliquas appropinquare⁸ tentaverit, sputum pro osculo reddas et pugnum obvium contrectanti; nec clerico in hoc deferas vel personae, quia castitatem mentis etiam verbere tueri licet, sicut corporis vitam. Talem, inquam, non arbitreris servum Christi sed Satanae; non spiritualem sed animalem; non pudicitiae sectatorem sed revera vilissimum leccatorem.

Quomodo transivit ad Ordinem Cisterciensem de Ordine S. Benedicti.

1.22 Fuit autem praeclara Lutgardis in monasterio S. Catharinae annis ferme duodecim monialis, et erat illo in tempore Magister Joannes de Liro dioecesis Leodiensis, vir utique in omni sanctitate praecipuus. Qui beatae ipsius feminae propositum perfectissimum sciens, eam admonuit ut in Aquiriam coenobium ad Ordinem Cisterciensem, loco et praelatione derelicta, transiret. Cumque linguae diversitatem in monialibus ibidem Gallicis causaretur, monasteriumque ejusdem ordinis in Herkenrode, ubi lingua Teutonica habebatur, intrare potius maluisset, dixit ei Dominus: Volo ut ad locum Aquiriae finaliter pergas, et nisi facias ego te deseram. Sed et quaedam beatissima virgo, Christina nomine, cujus meminit venerabilis Jacobus in *Vita beatae Mariae de Oignies*, cujus quoque vitam et ipsi descripsimus, spiritu compulsa divinitus ad eam accessit, in haec verba prorumpens: Quid cunctaris, inquit,

¹ AS animarum

² AS tantum utinam RV utinam tantum

³ AS an RV ac

⁴ RV etiam

⁵ AS per sola oscula RV per oscula

⁶ Romans 1:28

⁷ RV manum AS manu

⁸ RV appropriare AS appropinquare

adimplere ea quae tibi ex instinctu divino iubentur? Cui cum pia Lutgardis illa quae praemisimus in¹ linguae diversitate, quantum ad hominem rationabiliter satis, opponeret, inspirata protinus Christina respondit: Potius vellem in inferno esse cum Deo quam in caelo cum angelis sine Deo.

Revera bene et digne respondit. Ubicumque enim Christus, ibi et paradisosus est. Et hoc quia Veritas mentiri non potuit, quae latroni in cruce dixit: *Hodie mecum eris in paradiso*.² Constat enim quod illa die nequaquam anima Christi in paradisosum empyreum aut terrestrem ascendit, sed cum divinitate ad inferna descendit et cum eo latronis anima, quam secum futuram esse praedixit; et per hoc ubicumque esset, argumento necessario per locum a causa, paradisosum esse probavit. Praesentia enim Christi locum, quantumque odibilem, reddit summe delectabilem et spectabilius appetendum. . . . Posito enim quod infernus aequiparari non poterit simpliciter paradiso, tamen fuit approbanda responsio; quoniam magis eligendum est esse in quocumque loco cum summo et increato bono, quam in loco quantumcumque bono, vel terrestri vel empyreo paradiso, cum quolibet creato bono.

Digne ergo ad verba Christinae confirmata, pia Lutgardis offert ad omnia se paratam; neque enim fuit difficile aliquid persuadere Lutgardi in quo perfectioris vitae sanctimonia videretur. Parens ergo monitis dicti magistri, ad monasterium Ordinis Cisterciensis quod dicitur Aquiria, in terra Ducis Brabantiae, cum omni mentis tranquillitate transivit.

Quo audito moniales S. Catharinae inconsolabiliter doluerunt; dolorem vero earum Lutgardis comperiens, compassa est tribulatis. Cumque pro pace earum Domino supplicaret, apparuit ei gloriosa Virgo Maria, dulcissima consolatrix, et congratulata est ei quod domum et ordinem sibi specialiter dedicatum introisset; domum vero, pro qua ipsa rogaret, et spiritualiter et temporaliter suis precibus promoveret. Quod usque in hodiernum diem absque ullo dubio in ipsa S. Catharinae domo videmus. Dum ubique fere ordinis illius tepeat disciplina, ipsum vero monasterium, magis modo quam unquam antea, floreat in virtute et temporalibus sit copiosius augmentatum. Consulo autem tibi, o collegium sanctimonialium³ S. Catharinae, ut adhuc pro te matrem flagites, ut quod hic quondam fecit in terris, idem faciat in supernis.

Hic liber primus de iis quae pia Lutgardis in Ordine S. Benedicti gessit finem suscipiat, ut ad secundum librum expeditiori ordine procedamus.

Liber II

Caput I

Quomodo B. Virgo apparuit ei cum timeret se eligi in abbatissam; et quod miraculose non potuit Gallicum addiscere.

2.1 Igitur cum virtus piae Lutgardis ubique crebresceret, coeperunt nova monasteria in Gallicis partibus construi et ad electionem illius, dum modo parum de Gallico didicisset, multipliciter anhelare. Quod ut pia Lutgardis cognovit multum exhorruit, et conversa ad gloriosam virginem

¹ RV in AS *omittit*

² Luke 23:43

³ AS sanctimonialum RV sanctimonialium

Mariam, eam ut hoc averteret cum lacrymis exoravit. Cui Beata Mater apparens ait: Nullo modo paveas in hoc verbo, quia scutum meae protectionis opponam. Et vide lector, quali modo aversum hoc fuerit, et videbis quam mera veritas respondentis. Vix viginti quatuor annorum tempus attigerat cum Aquiriam intravit, et tamen talis in quadraginta annis quibus postea inter socias Gallicas vixit, tantum vix sermonis Gallici addiscere potuit ut panem recto modo Gallice peteret cum esurivit. Quod ubi palam omnibus factum est, dilecta hinnula Christi in somno contemplationis pausare permissa est, nec suscitavit eam aliquis neque evigilare ad curam pastorem fecit donec ipsa vellet; nec unquam accidit ut hoc vellet.

Quomodo B. Virgo conquesta est de gravitate Albingensium, et propter hoc iussa est septem annis continue jejunare in pane et cerevisia, tantum ut Dominus propitiaretur populo suo.

2.2 Imminente peste gravissima Albingensium haereticorum, beatissima Virgo Maria apparuit ei vultu lugubri et facie denigrata. Cui in visione compassa Lutgardis, cum magno rugitu cordis et vocis quaesivit ab ea: Quid habes, inquit, o piissima Domina, ut tanto pallore squaleat tua facies, plena omnium gratiarum? Et beata Virgo: Ecce, inquit, ab haereticis et malis Christianis rursus crucifigitur filius meus, rursus conspuitur. Tu ergo assume tibi lamentum et jejuna annis septem continuis ut quiescat ira filii mei, quae generaliter imminet orbi terrae.

Ex hinc ergo septem annis continuis Lutgardis in pane tantum et cerevisia jejunavit. Et magnitudinem vide miraculi. Obedientia saepe coacta, pulmenti aliquid accipere in ore tentavit, sed nihil horum ad magnitudinem fabae guttur ejus transire praevaluit. Et licet ipsamet mirabili quadam et incredibili abstinentia continue laboraret, gaudebat tamen quando conventus melius habebat in cibis; ita quod per mensem melius diceret se habere si quando conventus semel pitantiae abundantiam habuisset. Non enim omnibus in exhibitione gratiae commune posse esse sciebat quod sibi singulari dono ad remedium multorum pietas divina contulerat.

Et hoc contra illos qui fingunt laborem in praecepto, statuuntque communiter omnibus observandum quod ipsi, vel suffragante gratia vel opitulante natura, observare sine molestia potuerunt. Ipsa autem quanto plus continuavit jejunia, tanto fuit corpore et corde robustior.

Quomodo Mag. Jacobum de Vitriaco liberavit a quadam gravissima tentatione.

2.3 Cum Magister Jacobus de Vitriaco, ut ipse refert in libro vitae B. Mariae de Oignies, ipsius venerabilis feminae precibus praedicationis gratiam accepisset, factum est ut religiosam quamdam mulierem languentem in lecto, non turpi amore, sed nimis humano diligeret. Hujus igitur consolationi intentus assidue, praedicationis officium segniter omittebat. Pia ergo Lutgardis, vinculum cordis ejus et dolos diaboli in spiritu sentiens, aggressa est in multis lacrymis pro eo Dominum deprecari. Cumque nihil proficeret orando et Dominum super hoc argueret ut crudelem, respondit Dominus: Orationibus, inquit, tuis in contrarium homo nititur pro quo petis. Haec dicens distulit Dominus quod petebatur implere. Quod ut vidit pia Lutgardis, impatientius agens, Domino magnis vocibus inclamavit: Quid est, ait, quod agis, benignissime ac justissime Domine? Aut separa me a te aut hominem pro quo peto libera, etiam non volentem. Mira res! Nulla mora inter rogatum et factum penitus intervenit, sed prorsus et protinus liberatus, liberatori suo et ejus famulae benedixit, sensitque apertis oculis post liberationem periculum quod ante, humano amore caecatus, videre non poterat. Nec

grande post haec tempus excessit cum idem venerabilis Jacobus ad episcopatum Acconensem in transmarinis partibus est electus.

Quomodo quemdam Simonem, Fodiacensem Abbatem, liberavit a purgatorio violentissimis precibus ad Deum factis.

2.4 Sub eodem fere tempore quidam Simon, vir nobilis de Teutonia natus et optime litteris institutus, Ordinem Cisterciensem intrans, Fodiacensis Abbas postea factus est; qui licet fervens esset desiderio, amaro tamen zelo in subjectos invecus, immatura morte praeventus est. Hic cum piam Lutgardem pro sanctimonia vitae dilectissimam habuisset, eam sua morte turbatam graviter dereliquit, pro quo mox afflictiones et jejunia faciens, rogavit Dominum ut defuncti animam liberaret. Cumque multum precibus insisteret, respondit ei Dominus: Consolare, quia ob gratiam tui illi bene faciam pro quo oras. Illa autem importunius instans, secundo responsum accepit hominem debere in proximo liberari. Et illa: Quidquid mihi vis dare solatii, illi animae in purgatorio tribuas. Et subjunxit: Nullo modo, o Domine, desistam a fletibus, nec tuis unquam promissionibus consolabor, nisi illum liberatum viderim pro quo peto. Nec passus est eam Dominus ulterius tribulari, sed apparuit ei Dominus et praesentialiter secum liberatam a purgatorio animam mox adduxit, dicens: Consolare, dilecta. Ecce enim anima pro qua petis. Nec mora, pia Lutgardis prostrata in faciem super liberationem animae Dominum benedixit. Anima autem exultabunda et laudans piaie Lutgardi gratias retulit, et ad potiora transiens, in magna gloria caelorum ardua penetravit.

Iste idem Simon postea piaie Lutgardi frequenter apparuit, et inter cetera dixit ei quod quadraginta annos in purgatorio peregisset, nisi eum oratio illius apud misericordem Dominum adjuvisset.

Quomodo voluit certificari super statu suo, et apparuit omnibus videntibus juvenis splendidus ad consolandum eam.

2.5 Spiritu quoque timoris Domini pia Lutgardis humiliter insignita, quasi tumentes fluctus super se Dominum metuebat,¹ et omnia opera sua velut facta in dubio verebatur. Diu ergo ejulans quotidie Dominum precabatur ut se certam redderet etiam in praesenti. In hoc autem desiderio prolixius constituta, die quadam vocem ad se manifestissime factam audivit: Secura jam esto, carissima, quia placet Domino vita tua. Ad horam ergo pia Lutgardis exultans, coepit ut prius nihilominus formidare. Iterato autem ad eam vox facta divinitus dixit: Visne tu Dominam Mariam de Roavia testem tuae securitatis habere? Et illa: Non, inquit, nimis timorata est, et diu jam anxie mihi differret revelare quae sciret. Cui vox divina: Interim, inquit, quiesce, carissima. In proximo fies manifeste et perfecte segura.

Exinde vix quatuor dierum spatium pertransivit, cum ecce vir spectabilis et ignotus omnibus locutorium ubi moniales consederant introivit. Salutatis ergo breviter omnibus, postulavit piam Lutgardem ocus accersiri. Quae ut venit, salutavit eam et omnibus audientibus dixit: Haec tibi mandat Omnipotens: Jam segura vivas de cetero, quia Domino in te bene complacuit.² Haec dicens juvenis sine mora disparuit, nec ultra restabat quaerere unde venerat aut quis esset.

¹ Job 31:23 semper enim quasi tumentes super me fluctus

Non multo post quidam sanctissimae vitae homo revelationem divinam accipiens, in Aquiriam venit et eam in supradictis consolationibus confortavit.

Quomodo mori desiderabat, et apparuerunt ei vulnera Christi, clamantia ad eam pro peccatoribus.

2.6 Hinc ergo animo ferventiori desiderans per excessum mortis ad perennia transmigrare, quotidie oculus ejus stillabat ad Dominum; et ecce Dominus clamores ejus mitigare festinans, apparuit ei et vulneribus manuum pedumque et lateris patefactis dixit: Ecce contemplare, carissima, quod vulnera mea clamant ad te, ne in vanum effuderim sanguinem, ne in vanum sustinuerim mortem. Hoc viso et audito pia Lutgardis pavefacta mirifice, cum timore et horrore quaesivit quis esset clamor vulnere Christi. Et responsum est ei: Labore tuo et fletibus iram patris mitigabis accensam, ut non perdat peccatores in mortem, sed per misericordiam Dei convertantur et vivant.

Quomodo Innocentius Papa III mortuus statim apparuit ei.

2.7 Sub isto fere tempore Dominus Innocentius Papa tertius, post celebratum Lateranense Concilium, ab hac vita migravit, nec intercessit mora post obitum cum ipse Papa pia Lutgardi visibiliter apparuit. Illa autem ut vidit apparentem, maxima flamma circumdatum, quis sic esset interrogat. Et ille: Ego sum, inquit, Innocentius Papa. Et illa cum gemitu: Quid est, inquit, te nostrum omnium patrem tanto supplicio cruciari? Cui ille: Tres, inquit, causae sunt quare sic crucior. Per has autem eram dignissimus aeterno supplicio tradi, sed per intercessionem piissimae Virginis Mariae, cui monasterium aedificavi, in fine poenitui et aeternam mortem evasi. Cruciabor tamen atrocissimis poenis usque in diem extremi iudicii. Hoc ipsum autem, quod ad te petiturus suffragia venire potui, mihi utique a suo filio misericordiae mater obtinuit. Haec cum dixisset repente disparuit. Lutgardis autem obitum et necessitatem defuncti sororibus, ut ei succurrerent, indicavit. Ipsamet autem animo compassa tanto piaculo, mirabili se pro illo qui apparuit afflixit supplicio.

Nota autem lector, quod ex revelatione pia Lutgardis ipsas tres causas accepimus, sed eas ob tanti pontificis reverentiam subticemus.

Quomodo Magister Joannes de Liro apparuit ei statim mortuus, et quid Christus dixit ei dum plangeret illum mortuum.

2.8 Consimilis in genere, sed in piaculo multum dissimilis visio, Lutgardi per idem fere tempus apparuit. Praedictus venerabilis Joannes de Liro vivens cum Lutgarde pactum inierat, ut qui prius ex ipsis a mundo decederet, post mortem superstiti appareret. Curiam ergo Romanam idem Joannes pro negotiis adiens religiosarum mulierum quae per Brabantiam ab aemulis turbabantur, veniens circa montes Alpium est defunctus. Nec mora, sub ejusdem mortis articulo apparuit visibiliter Lutgardi in claustrum ambitu stanti. Vivere ergo illum credens, manu innuit ut locutorium introiret, ubi scilicet loqui secundum ordinem posset. Cui ille: Ego, inquit, sum mortuus et ab hoc seculo transii, et ut veritatem rei¹ implerem quae inter nos ex pacto convenerat, tibi defunctus apparui. Et mox illa in terram prostrata quaesivit: Quid autem

¹ AS Dei RV rei

significat vestimentum triplex, quo tanta gloria potitus indueris? Et ille: Vestimentum, inquit, nive candidum virgineae carnis meae, quam ab utero impollutam servavi, innocentiam signat; rubicundum vero labores et tolerantias quibus ad mortem perductus sum, et quas multo tempore pro justitia et veritate sustinui, apte demonstrat; caeruleum vero, quo in superficie vestior, spiritualis vitae perfectionem significat. Haec dicens ab oculis mirantis evanuit. Illa autem et visionem et obitum dicti magistri sorori ejus carnali et aliis monialibus indicavit.

Verum tamen cum ipsa pia Lutgardis dictum venerabilem virum, et si Deo datum, sibi tamen defleret ablatum, in ipso luctu ei Dominus per haec verba respondit: Cur fles, Lutgardis? Et quamobrem affligitur cor tuum? *Numquid non melior sum tibi quam decem filii?*¹ Haec igitur, sicut laica monialis, cum non intelligeret ac² interpretata audisset, non ultra defunctum luit, sed in morte illius Dominum per omnia benedixit.

Quomodo secundo revelatum est ei ut alios septem annos pro peccatoribus jejunaret: et sicut ipse Christus Patri se pro peccatoribus in sacramenti sacrificio quotidie se offerebat, sic et ista se Christo offerret.

2.9 Expletis praeterea supradictis septem annis quibus in pane et cerevisia jejunavit, iterato revelatum est ei ut pro peccatoribus universaliter jejunaret. Quod illa gratanter accepit, et alios septem annos in pane tamen et olere jejunavit. Adjecit autem Dominus visionem, et rapta in spiritu vidit salutis nostrae principem Jesum, cum vulneribus quasi recentibus atque rubentibus, vultui patris astantem, et patri pro peccatoribus supplicantem. Qui conversus Lutgardi dixit: Videsne tu quemadmodum me totum patri pro meis peccatoribus offero? Sic etiam volo ut te mihi totam pro meis peccatoribus offeras, et zelum contra illos in vindictam accensum avertas. Hoc idem ei Dominus Jesus in sacrificio Missae quotidie fere dicebat.

Quod autem preces et jejunia atque labores B. Lutgardis virtutem magnam haberent, in morte testata est illa beatissima Maria de Oignies, ubi velo ipsius caput suum velans ac ligans, spiritu prophetiae tacta praedixit: Sub caelo, ait, non habet mundus Domina Lutgarde fideliores et magis efficacem in precibus pro liberandis animabus a purgatorio et pro peccatoribus exoratricem. Spiritualia miracula in vita sua nunc facit; corporalia post mortem efficiet. Quam vera ista sint, multi et in vita ejus experti sunt et post mortem; sicut postea praesens scriptura testabitur, non desinit operari.

Quomodo daemon apparuit ei et dixit se decepisse quamdam monialem, et quomodo illa monialis liberata est.

2.10 Cum quaedam religiosissima monialis in revelationibus quasi a Deo sibi factis per diabolum deciperetur, pia Lutgarde orante pro illa Dominum, respondit Dominus: *Illumina his qui in tenebris et umbra mortis sedent.*³ Cumque haec verba Domini, utpote laica, non intelligeret, quaesivit ea a quadam moniali et intellecta recepit. Instantius ergo ipsa Dominum supplicante, apparuit ei daemon dicens: Ego sum spiritus mendax qui illam decipio monialem. Cui illa: Vade, inquit, ad Fratrem Simonem in Alna monasterio degentem, et idem dicas ei, ut testem habeam

¹ I Samuel (I Kings Vulg.) 1:7

² RV ac AS *omittit*

³ Luke 1:79

veritatis. Nec mora, obedit diabolus, et Frater Simon in Aquiriam venit. Erat autem idem Simon vir Dei spiritu plenus, et sicut liber ejus vitae testatur, cui Dominus plurima revelavit. In unum ergo pia Lutgardis et Frater Simon secundum revelationem Domini concordantes, monialem protinus mandaverunt.

Nec mora, manus et membra monialis contrahebantur rigore fortissimo, et os ejus adeo fortiter claudebatur ut cultello non posset aliquatenus aperiri. Videntes ergo turbabantur timore horribili, et flexis in oratione genibus, pro tanto piaculo misericordem Dominum exorabant. Quid ergo factum est? Nequaquam fas erat in tantorum precibus inexorabilem Dominum inveniri. Mox ergo ut ab oratione Dei supplices surrexerunt, monialis membra ad statum pristinum redierunt aperuitque os, et cibum sumens confortata est, et ab illo die ac deinceps a deceptionis spiritu liberata. Tantis autem postea praerogativis vitae meritis, ut ipsemet vidi, condonata est ut non solum illuminata in tenebris dici posset, sed etiam alios multos existentes in tenebris morum exemplis illuminaret.

Quomodo quaedam moniales ab incolis daemonibus liberatae sunt per eam.

2.11 Vidi ego ipse Cisterciensis Ordinis monialem quae multis annis a daemone vexata, ad eam adducta est et per maximam ejus precum instantiam liberata. Vidi et aliam quae a daemone incubo annis plurimis mirabiliter fatigata, per preces ejus erepta est et mundata. Fuit autem, ut ipsa mihi frequentissime testabatur, nequissimus ille daemon, qui eam vexaverat et tanta spurcitia inquinaverat corpus ejus, ut nisi maxima violentia precum repressa fuisset, saepius se ad publicum meretricium obtulisset. Liberata autem per preces Dominae Lutgardis, in tanta pace peregit vitam, ac si numquam eam daemoniacae vexationis stimulus agitasset.

Mira certe, et mira valde permissio Salvatoris ac Redemptoris, quod potestatem accipit Satan in mundo corpore, et hoc corpore virginali. Quae potestas non tantum exercetur ad carnis inquinamentum, verum etiam vix fieri potest quin procedat ad corruptionem mentis et animae detrimentum. Quid mundius sponsa Christi? Quid mundius virgine, quae est sancta corpore et spiritu? Et tamen in talem fieri ista percepimus. Quid restat ergo nisi exclamare cum Apostolo: *O altitudo divitiarum sapientiae et scientiae Dei! Quam incomprehensibilia sunt judicia ejus, et investigabiles viae ejus!*¹ Credimus tamen quod occulto et justo Dei judicio mulieres² ad istud inquinamentum per excessum tentationis illicitum perducantur: quomodo autem aliter, non videmus.

Quomodo quaedam Yolendis monialis, praemonita ante mortem per eam, apparuit post eam.

2.12 Quaedam Yolendis, monialis nigra in monasterio super Sambram, mundi illecebris dedita, ad monasterium de Aquiria hortatu piae feminae convolvit; fuit autem nobilis genere et delicatissimi corporis femina. Pro hac pia Lutgardis mira precum instantia Dominum exoravit ut ei peccata dimitteret et gratiam infunderet devotionis. Nec potuit Christus negare quod petiit, sed mulierem ad sanctae conversationis statum perduxit. Cum ergo ibidem annis pluribus Domino deserviret, obitum suum Domino revelante cognovit et accessit ad piam matrem suam Dominam Lutgardem. Pro me, inquit, instantissime Dominum deprecereis, quoniam vitae meae

¹ Romans 11:33

² RV multi

instat jam finis. Cui pia Lutgardis: Constanter, inquit, expecta Dominum, quia certa sum quod tecum misericorditer aget, et in proximo te a poenis quas vereris eripiet. Tu autem post mortem revertaris ad me, et rediens primo mihi dicito *Benedicite*; deinde *Pater noster* cum *Salutatione Angelica* perorabis, ne solito modo¹ diabolus aliquod figmentum adducat.

Mortua est ergo, ut praedixit, in miro fervore spiritus monialis, et nec triginta dierum tempus excessit cum ecce, orante pia Lutgarde, mortua ei Yolendis apparuit, et sicut in vita rogata fuerat, primo dixit *Benedicite* et cetera quae praedixi. Pia ergo Lutgarde respondente *Dominus*, statim intulit: Quomodo est, inquit, tibi? Et mortua: Dominus, inquit, non abhorruit me pro meorum enormitate peccatorum, sed ob gratiam tui magnam consecuta sum misericordiam. Et hoc dicto disparuit. Lutgardis autem cum multis lacrymis divinam super peccatores misericordiam benedixit.

Quomodo soror sua mortua apparuit ei.

2.13 Sed et soror sua carnalis de mundo ad purgatorium transiens, antequam piae Lutgardis mors sororis indicaretur, ei subito in aëre vox horribilis et lamentabilis inclamavit: Miserere, soror carissima, miserere mei, et mihi misericordiam eamdem quam aliis animabus praestitisti clementer impendas. Intellexit autem prostrata in precibus quod anima sororis suae orationum suffragia postularet, et mox exegit ab omnibus ut conventus illam in multis disciplinis et orationibus adjuvaret.

Quomodo prohibita fuit omni die Dominico accedere ad sacramentum altaris.

2.14 Eodem fere in tempore res apud multos pro animi admiratione habita contigit, quam subjungo. Cum enim pia Lutgardis secundum consilium Augustini omni die Dominico perciperet corpus Christi, prohibita est pia Lutgardis a Domina Agnete minus discreto usa consilio, tunc temporis abbatissa, sumere omni die Dominico² sacramenta. Cui pia Lutgardis dixit: Obediens quidem ero, Mater carissima, sed hoc certissime praecognosco, quod in carne tua Christus hanc injuriam vindicabit. Nec mora, in vindictam facti, in tantum a Domino per intolerabilem infirmitatem afflicta est quod ecclesiam ingredi non valeret, nec cessavit dolor per momenta concrevens, donec reatum indiscretionis agnosceret et prohibitionem in pia Lutgarde poenitens relaxaret. Sed et illae quae in hoc facto fuerant contra illam, aut notabiliter ab hac luce subtractae³ sunt vel se ad illam humilitatis spiritu converterunt. Dignus zelus Sponsi erga sponsae suae improbos turbatores.

Quomodo daemon apparuit ei in morte cujusdam sororis.

2.15 Spiritus ejus super morientes in magna semper misericordia ferebatur; visitabat ergo eos ad confessionem peccatorum admonens et impellens, spem certam poenitentibus, et peracta poenitentia gloriam repromittens. Cum ergo quaedam soror ageret in agone et fine gravissimo vexaretur, apparuit ei daemon insultando et dixit: Ecce vexavi sororem illam; sed cum venisset populus, nihil amplius praevalui in ea. *Populum* autem conventum vocavit, qui ad

¹ RV modo AS *omittit*

² AS Dominco RV Dominico

³ AS subtracta RV subtractae

commendandam animam sororis veniens, vires illius precibus enervavit. Sanctum ergo et pium est assistere morientibus, et eos contra daemones qui finis nostri calcaneo semper insidiantur precibus adjuvare.

Quomodo daemones frequenter apparebant ei, et quomodo timebant eam.

2.16 Frequenter quoque ad eam daemones veniebant et funestum vel triste aliquid annuntiabant. Illa autem conspuebat eos et importunos crucis signaculo depellebat. Adeo daemones timebant eam ut etiam locum orationis ejus quasi ferrum candens vitarent attingere. Et ipsa quidem cum nec Psalmos intelligeret nec aliquid de Scripturis, in ruminacione tamen illius Psalmi, *Deus in adiutorium meum intende*,¹ et aliorum quorundam versuum in Psalterio, videbat daemones miro horrore diffugere et a mali suggestionibus cessare. Unde intelligebat virtute verborum etiam a se non intellectorum praesentias daemonum propulsari, et eorum in tentationibus potentiam enervari.

Refert Frater Bernardus quod eam secreto dicentem audivit nihil se timere diabolum, nec in ullo deceptionis modo adversus eam posset aliquatenus praevalere. Sed secundum promissum Domini, ipsa caput, id est initium tentationum ejus, virtutum pede potentissime conterebat.

Caput II

Quomodo metuebat se non bene semper dixisse Horas debitas, et propter hoc quidam missus a Domino securam fecit eam.

2.17 Pia itaque Lutgardis, cum ad omnem perfectionem mirabiliter anhelaret, coepit miro modo insistere ut omnem penitus cogitationem,² non tantum malas verum etiam bonas, a se in dicendis horis repelleret, et quod in statu vitae mortalis impossibile est, eo solo quod diceret animum occuparet. Cumque hoc efficere minime potuisset, coepit semetipsam grandi mentis scrupulo perturbare, et quasi nihil dixisset, secundo vel tertio horas singulas iterare. Lugebat ergo in isto necessario vitae defectu, et a nullo amicorum suorum in hoc potuit consolari. Fiebant autem orationes ad Deum pro ea ut eam Dominus ab hoc scrupulo liberaret. Nec eos fefellit Omnipotens.

Inopinate enim induit pastorem Dominus oviculas insequentem, ad instar Amos Prophetae, et in ore ejus verbum consolationis posuit pius Pater. Oves igitur mox dimittens rudis pastor ad tredecim milliaria in Aquiriam venit, et accersita pia Lutgarde, audientibus etiam aliis dixit: Haec dicit Dominus: Nullo ulterius pro dicendis horis dolore torquearis aut scrupulo; placibiles sunt orationes tuae et in conspectu meo gratanter acceptae. Haec ut dixit pastor, repente diffugit, nec locus fuit quis esset quaerere vel aliquid amplius scire. Postea tamen notum factum est quis esset aut fuisset.

¹ Psalm 70:1 (Vulg. 69:2)

² AS cognitionem RV cogitationem

Sed et per seipsum Dominus dixit ei: Nihil verearis ulterius¹, quoniam in te istum supplebo defectum. Pia autem Lutgardis verbum utrobique de ore Domini prolatum sentiens, in pace conscientiae requievit, nec amplius eam postea super hoc inordinatus scrupulus fatigavit.

Quomodo flamma visa est exire de ore ejus dum cantaret.

2.18 Itaque non posset credi de facili cum quanta spiritus alacritate in cantandis horis Domino deserviret. Cum ergo die quadam in vespere cantaret in choro, monialis quaedam, quae ab opposita parte in choro stabat, visibilibus oculis corporalis luminis flammam de ore ejus vidit ascendere et in sublimi aëre penetrare. Ad cujus visum insolitum timida et pavefacta puella fere exanimis facta est. Finitis ergo vespere pia Lutgardis monialem dulciter consolata, tandem adhuc timenti dixit: Nolo te, filia carissima, ista visione terreri, quia in veritate divinitus factam intelligas.

Nota ergo lector, quod de multis hoc legitur accidisse, et corporalem flammam in eis visam fervidae orationis desiderium figurasse. Plerique minus spirituales mirati sunt quomodo in factis tam magnificis calcare humanam gloriam potuissent. Et respondeo: Adeo (ut mihi ipsamet dixit) spirituali et solida interius gloria plena fuit quod nulla eam forinsecus inanis gloria vexare potuit; sed veluti columnam Spiritus Sanctus eam immobilem fixit.

Quomodo communicata Corpori Domini, noluit carere prandio, sed dixit Domino ut quamdam debilem monialem occuparet reliquiis cogitationum; et sic factum est et probatum.

2.19 Augustinus, doctorum omnium maximus, in libro de Civitate Dei dicat quod in cunctis nobis semper debeat praeesse discretio et quasi moderando singulas discernere voluntates. Piam utique² Lutgardem discretione maxima novimus viguisse, quod patet in hoc capitulo quod subjungo. Die quadam Dominica, cum sacramentum salutare Christi corporis accepisset et reliquiae cogitationis diem festum in ea agerent Salvatori, ita quod grave esset ei ad mensam cibi corporalis accedere, dixit: Domine Jesu, non est modo mihi congruum tempus tuis deliciis occupari, sed vade ad Elizabeth, quae una hora a cibus abstinere non potest, et occupa cor ejus; me autem comedere permittas et refici. Erat enim ibidem quaedam monialis quae infirmitate hujusmodi laborabat, ut pluries in die et pluries in nocte eam refici oporteret. Ad verbum ergo piae Lutgardis mox Christus obediens, ad monialem repente transivit et cor ejus tanta suavitate replevit ut a corporali cibo contra consuetudinem sine ulla molestia per longum temporis spatium abstinere. In hoc ergo notari potest discretio magna piae Lutgardis, quod debilitare noluit corpus suum occupatione etiam spirituali, utilius ducens illud ad multos alios labores animabus utiles conservare, quam extra horam (quia omnia tempus habent) ad destructionem sui inutiliter fatigari.

Et hoc quidem contra illos qui, semel aut bis spiritus suavitate degustata, sibimet inimici crudeliter corpus abjiciunt, et dum in Deum per hoc tendunt spiritu fortiori, corpus in adjutorium spiritus datum destruunt; et sic spiritum, per destructionem corporis impotentem effectum, miris sinunt miseriis aggravari. Corpus enim quod corrumpitur aggravat animam. Contra quos expertissimus doctor loquitur Paulus: *Nemo, inquit, carnem suam odio habuit, sed*

¹ AS ultrius RV ulterius

² RV itaque

*nutrit et fovet eam.*¹ Nutrit utique non ad delectationem sed ad sustentationem. Abraham montem visionis ascendens, oblato sacrificio ad asinum rediit; cui Salomon onus jubet imponi, et postea paleam dari. De his lector quid agat excogitet; nos autem brevitatis causa ad reliqua transeamus.

Quomodo eadem Elizabeth curata fuit, ipsa orante.

2.20 De eadem Elizabeth inopinabile multum miraculum accidit, quod subjungo. Sicut enim diximus, omni fere hora eam comedere non solum diebus, sed etiam noctibus quandoque oportebat, et tamen ita debilis erat quod nullo modo in pedibus stare posset, sed in lecto continue decumbebat. Cum ergo in pia Lutgarde virtutem orationis luce clarius agnovisset, rogavit eam cum magna cordis instantia quatenus pro ea Dominum exoraret, ut ei ante mortem possibilitatem surgendi et conventum frequentandi concederet, ut per hoc ante finem vitae suae Domino Jesu Christo plenius deserviret. Annuit ergo illa pro ea Dominum deprecari. Cui Dominus in haec eadem verba respondit: *Elevare, inquit, elevare, consurge filia Hierusalem quae bibisti de manu Domini calicem irae ejus.*²

Hanc ergo responsionem Domini et causam responsionis cum litteratis monialibus indicasset, adverterunt ex aegritudinis lecto Elizabeth elevandam et consurrecturam in sanum statum, in quo solvenda erant vincla colli ejus et captivitas elidenda, quibus in infirmaria debiles non tantum modestis, verum etiam discolis subjici ministris oportet voluntarios pariter et invitos.

Et factum est sicut ei Dominus dixerat, elevataque Elizabeth de lecto aegritudinis in quo jacuerat annis multis, consurrexit ad onus ordinis indefesse, et perfectissima sanitate diu postea Christo Domino deservivit.

Quomodo desideravit martyrium pro Christo sustinere, et illo desiderio rupta est vena contra situm cordis sui et in mirabili copia effudit sanguinem; et sic Dominus dixit ei quod exinde acciperet meritum Agnetis in martyrio.

2.21 Recogitabat eum qui talem a peccatoribus sustinuit tribulationem, et miro modo accensa est Christo vicem rependere et pro eo martyrium sustinere. Sed quia tempus martyrii velut *hiems transiit, imber abiit et recessit,*³ Christus ei aliud genus, etiam corporalis, martyrii praeparavit. Accidit enim nocte quadam ut dicto completorio ante lectum suum in dormitorio staret, orationibus occupata. Ecce incidit illi cogitatio de praemissis, coepitque miro et ineffabili modo desiderare ut pro Christo, sicut Agnes beatissima, martyrium sustineret. Cumque tantum in tali desiderio aestuaret ut jam se mori prae desiderio crederet, rupta est ei vena contra situm cordis extrinsecus, et exinde tantum sanguinis fluxit ut tunicae ejus et cuculla copiosissime rigarentur. Debilitata ergo resedit paululum, et statim apparuit ei Christus in vultu congratulantis et dixit: Pro desiderantissimo fervore martyrii, quem in effusione istius sanguinis habuisti, idem martyrii meritum in caelo recipies quod Agnes beatissima pro fide mea in capitis abscissione suscepit, quia martyrium ejus tuo desiderio in sanguine compensasti.

¹ Ephesians 5:29

² Isaiah 51:17

³ Canticum 2:11

Hoc concordat illi quod in principio libri primi posuimus ubi matrona quaedam nobilis et devota pia Lutgardi adhuc juvenulae dixisse refertur: Tu, ait, bona Agnes et vere Agnes altera eris. O plane beatissima mulier, quam ipse Christus in pacis tempore corona martyrii decoravit.

Hujus gloriosissimi facti testes duae de monialibus extiterunt, Margareta et Lutgardis cognomento Limmos, devotissimae feminae, quae post effusionem sanguinis pia Lutgardis vestimenta laverunt. Testis quoque fuit et cicatrix ruptae venae usque in diem qua felix ejus anima ab hoc seculo transmigravit. Testis cessatio vexationis fuit qua Deus in Evae sexu superbiam mitigavit. Fuit autem annorum viginti et octo quando ei ista contigisse feruntur.

Quomodo quaedam Domina Machtildis monialis recepit aurium perditum per impositionem digiti ejus.

2.22 Mathilde matrona nobilis, de partibus nata Leodii, filios milites heredes relinquens, in Aquiria Domino serviebat. Senio autem et debilitate confecta, quod inde consequi solet, auditum penitus perdidit. In vesperis autem solemnibus die quadam cum moniales alta voce cantarent, et hoc quaedam monialis dictae matronae surdae signo innueret, illaque signum intelligens suam surditatem defleret, adveniens pia Lutgardis signo cur fleret interrogat. Et illa: Ego, inquit, miserrima quare non fleam, quae in tantum privor auditu ut solemnitatem cantus quo Deo servitur audire non possim? Mox pia Lutgardis compassa ploranti, et ad orationem paululum inclinata surrexit, et duos digitos suo sputo liniens, auribus surdis imposuit. Mira res! Repente mulier cum fragore rumpi interius oppilationem audiens aurium, patefactis ad plenum auribus mox audivit, et in tanto miraculo virtutem pia Lutgardis sentiens, Dominum magnifice benedixit.

Quomodo memor passionis Christ, in contemplatione visa est a quodam presbytero quasi perfusa totaliter sanguine.

2.23 Quoties rapta in spiritu passionis Dominicae memor erat, videbatur ei quod essentialiter per totum corpus sanguine perfusa ruberet. Hoc cum quidam religiosus presbyter secretius audivisset, observans eam tempore opportuno quo dubium non erat secundum tempus Christi fore memorem passionis, aggressus est illam videre ubi acclinis ad parietem in contemplatione jacebat. Et ecce, vidit faciem ejus et manus, quae tantum nudae patebant, quasi recenti perfusas sanguine relucere; cincinnos vero ejus, quasi guttis noctium, infusos sanguine. Quod videns clam forcipe partem illorum in partem tulit, et ad lucem eos in manu ferens, cum supra modum attonitus miraretur, pia Lutgarde de raptu contemplationis ad sensum forinsecus revertente, cincinni quoque in manu stupentis ad colorem naturalem protinus revertuntur. Qui statim ultra quam credi potest ad tam ingens spectaculum pavefactus, fere cecidit resupinus.

Nota autem lector, quod nimirum pia Lutgardis rubere sanguine visa est quia de illis specialissime fuit in vita qui laverunt stolas suas in sanguine Agni. Ex intellectuali enim consideratione mentis interius, similitudinem traxit corpus exterius.

Quomodo quemdam Dominum Tymerum militem, virum flagitiosum, violentissimis precibus convertit ad Dominum.

2.24 Miles quidam, genere et divitiis pollens, filiam in Aquiria habuit monialem. Quae cum patrem sciret¹ diversis flagitiis irretitum, eum ad hoc induxit ut a pia Lutgarde orationes peteret, et se ab illa, sicut in talibus mos est, in spiritualem filium recipi postularet. Annuit illa adiitque pro illo Dominum deprecari. Et ecce apparuit Satan cuidam in eodem monasterio moniali dicens: Ecce nititur Domina Lutgardis de vinculis meis militem Tymerum, qui mihi tot annis servivit, eripere. Sine illam; non est opus parvi temporis quod incepit. Ego autem, et si nihil aliud, id tamen efficiam ut in camino paupertatis cor ejus fervere faciam, et tabescet ejus anima sicut caro frixari assolet in patella.

Et tu, lector, vide quam mira veritas in mendace. Et quidem cum ipse miles illo in tempore maximis possessionibus et divitiis abundaret, ita successione parvi temporis est dilapsus, ut pecuniam paratam ad mille quingentas libras expenderet, et venditis postea possessionibus, ad tantam pauperiem deveniret ut vix panem in suprema necessitate haberet. In his omnibus tamen tantam patientiam noscitur habuisse ut nullus haesitaret piae Lutgardis preces militi adfuisse. Hunc ergo in Affligemio, omnium illius ordinis ordinatissimo coenobio, monachum vidimus, et pro mirabili conversatione in tali aetate et patientia ab omnibus venerari. Tali et consimili modo pia Lutgardis precibus suis a diaboli laqueis plures eripuit et ad correctiorem statum bonae vitae perduxit.

Quomodo monialem a tentationibus liberavit; et eadem miraculose quod precabatur obtinuit.

2.25 Puella quaedam Ordinis Cisterciensis, cum gravissimo tentationum incommodo gravaretur, vidit ante annos multos sibi piam Lutgardem in somnis apparere, dictumque est ei illius debere se precibus liberari. Diu ergo postea² in Aquiriam venit, ejusque faciem, in somnis tamen prius cognitam, recognovit; quam etiam, secundum quod praediximus, maxima precum instantia ab omni tentationum incommodo liberavit. Tunc illa, piae Lutgardis in sui liberatione experta virtutem, rogavit eam quatenus ab Omnipotente Deo precibus impetraret ut ordinis sui sustinere labores et carere esu carniū posset. Ab infantia enim puella languerat, et vix diebus jejunii carere carnibus poterat. Pia autem Lutgardis, cum aetatem puellae nimis teneram in tali abstinencia causaretur, et puella tamen impleri votum instantissime precaretur, tandem ejus lacrymis victa dixit: Vadas hinc, et ab ista die potestatem habebis ut et carnibus careas et tuum ordinem teneas, ac superaddere³ quod placebit.

Mirum vere et stupendum miraculum. Regressa puella ad locum suum, ei, secundum quod consuetum erat, in infirmaria carnes apponebantur. Quas ubi intuita est in simillima specie pudibundis viri in disco praepositas,⁴ visu mox horruit, ita quod prorsus comedere facie aversa non potuit. Quod ubi saepe tentatum est, tantam abominationem carniū in mente concepit quod numquam post verba piae Lutgardis carnes comedit. Et non solum labores ordinis, verum etiam quidquid in mortificationem sui corporis sustinere voluit, ipsi sine omni molestia facillimum fuit. Haec mihi eadem puella, jam admodum vetula facta, et in regimine monasterii

¹ AS suum RV sciret

² AS postea ad eam RV *omittit* ad eam

³ AS superadde RV superaddere

⁴ RV pudibunda viri in disco preposita AS pudibundae vix in disco propositos (Versio Suriana: Quas illa intuens, vidit quandam abominabilem speciem prae se ferre)

posita abbatissa, cum maxima verecundia retulit, sed eam laus piaie Lutgardis ista utique narrare coegit.

Quomodo cuidam mulieri graviter tentatae praedixit quod deberet in Parasceve mori.

2.26 Hespelendis quaedam religiosa puella, in tentationum excessu prae nimia tristitia desperata, cum piaie Lutgardis orationum suffragia postulasset et illa pro ea orationes et lacrymas copiose fudisset, Domino revelante respondit: Consolari, inquit, te oportet, carissima, quia in Parasceve, cum post adorationem Crucis sacerdos exaltando Crucem dixerit, *Ecce lignum Crucis*, tu ab omni tentationum impetu liberaberis et consolationem¹ consequeris. Et factum est ita. Nam illa in hora qua praedictum est liberatur, et per consolationis fiduciam divinae gratiae condonatur.

Quomodo quidam vir, in solo conspectu ejus, est contritus pro peccatis, et satisfaciens liberatus.

2.27 Venerabilis Joannes Abbas Affligemiensis, cum secum quemdam virum ad piam Lutgardem duxisset, ille, aspectu illius, vultu anxio percussus est. Miratus ergo abbas, cum ad remotiora venisset dixit viro: Vidisti, ait, illam sanctam mulierem? Et ille ex imo pectore suspiria trahens: Vidi, inquit, et in aspectu ejus, velut in aspectu divinae majestatis, tanto horrore peccaminum sum percussus ut ejus auxiliante suffragio peccatis eximar, nec Deo dante relabar. Quod ita factum, dictus abbas memorabilis recordatur.

Quomodo epilepticum sanavit.

2.28 Mulier quaedam epilepticum filium habuit, Joannem nomine, pro quo multo tempore anxie tristabatur, et factum est ut in somnis ei verbum hujusmodi diceretur: Vade ad Dominam Lutgardem in Aquiria commorantem, et tuus per eam liberabitur filius. Mane autem facto cum filio in Aquiriam venit et piaie Lutgardi filium obtulit. Quae statim oratione praemissa, digitum illi in os posuit et crucem in pectore pollice fixit. Et ab illa die et deinceps puerum ab omni epilepsiae incommodo liberavit.

Quomodo in festo omnium sanctorum ei multitudo sanctorum apparuit.

2.29 Tempore quodam cum festum omnium sanctorum ageretur, in ipso festo piaie Lutgardi multitudo maxima sanctorum per visionem apparuit, et quod omnium spiritu et omnium gratia plena esset ei Sanctus Spiritus revelavit.

Quid miri? Si enim secundum² virtutes dona sunt, quo carere dono vel gratia debuit, quae omni virtute plena refulsit?

Quomodo Dominae Sibyllae, gravatae servitio ejus, per vocem nocte responsum fuit.

2.30 Cum quodam tempore pia Lutgardis debilitate corporis aegrotaret, Domina Sybilla de Gaggis, quae ei ab ingressu ordinis devotissime servire consueverat, instigante nequitiae spiritu, ex diutino labore paene deficiens, corde et corpore fatigabatur, dixitque semel in corde suo: Ut quid in Dominae Lutgardis servitute sic laboro? Numquam mater mea tantum alicui cui in vita

¹ AS consolationis fiduciam RV consolationem

² *Surius addit* Augustinum

servivit, nec me decet esse tantae deditam servituti. Nec mora, in ipsa nocte audivit quamdam vocem dicentem sibi: *Non veni ministrari,¹ sed ministrare.²* Quod ut illa audivit, seipsam graviter reprehendit, et pia Lutgardi postea in maxima jucunditate et delectatione servivit.

Quomodo quidam desperatus, loquens ei, lucidissimam claritatem super eam vidit, et confortatus est.

2.31 Homo quidam, in labe criminum desperatus, ad eam adductus est ut saltem ejus colloquiis solaretur. Nec mora, ubi juxta eam resedit et ejus verba audire coepit, vidit ultra omnem fulgorem super eam inaestimabilem claritatem. Quo in visu exhilaratus homo et nimirum ad spem veniae confortatus, abscessit.

Quomodo in Cantico, Te Deum laudamus, B. Virgo apparuit ei.

Frequenter accidit ut dum psalmodiam ruminaret, ei Spiritus Sanctus virtutem et intelligentiam versuum revelaret. Accidit ergo nocte quadam ut dum in cantico, *Te Deum laudamus*, versum illum, *Tu ad liberandum suscepturus hominem, non horruisti Virginis uterum*, diceret, ei beatissima Virgo Maria quasi congratulans appareret, intellexitque versum istum beatissimae Virgini fore gratissimum, per quem memoratur suscepisse Dei filium. Hoc ergo mihi ipsamet sicut filio dilecto revelans, admonuit ut quoties versum istum dicerem, me toto corpore ad laudem gloriosae Virginis inclinarem. Quod et diu feci et facio, et ad idem faciendum cunctos legentes admoneo.

Quomodo compatiendi cuidam pauperulae, Dominus dixit ei, Portio mea.

2.33 Pauperulam quandam indigentem valde conspiciens, ad benefaciendum ei miro compassionis spiritu monebatur, et mox in spiritu dixit illi Dominus: In Psalmo legis, et dicis mihi: *Portio mea, Domine, dixi custodire legem tuam.*³ Quod sic intelligas: Portio tua ego sum, nihil habes aliud, et ideo egenti respondeas: *Aurum et argentum non est mecum, quod autem habeo hoc tibi dabo.*⁴ Ores autem pro ea, et dedisti ei quod tuum est. Haec dicens, custodisti legem meam.

Ad haec igitur Dei verba modo mirabili interius illustrata, ad Dominam Sybillam de Gagis venit, et quid ei Dominus dixerat indicavit. Quae scrutatis glossis super illum locum Psalterii, *Portio mea, Domine, dixi custodire legem tuam*, invenit lucidissime secundum glossam eidem Dominum respondisse. Constat ergo quia sacrae Scripturae eo spiritu sunt expositae quo et editae.

Simili modo cum quidam monachus Affligemii in parochiam dissolutissimam mitteretur, et eam rogaret suppliciter ut in tanto periculo pro se Dominum exoraret, respondit ei dicens: *Expectans*

¹ AS ministrare RV ministrari

² Matthew 20:28

³ Psalm 119:57 (Vulg. 118:57)

⁴ Acts 3:6

expectavi Dominum, et intendit mihi.^{1 2} Quod ita evidentissime sic factum vidit, ut nil penitus haesitaret quin ei pia Lutgardis ex Dei spiritu respondisset.

Caput III

Quomodo in multis spiritu prophetico claruit; quomodo et nomen et meritum cujusdam virginis Osannae designatum fuit per eam, quod per annos multos ignoratum erat.

2.34 Constat multis et per multa piam Lutgardem spiritu prophetiae claruisse. Quidam ordine presbyter, ad Gallicas partes in Jotrensi monasterio Galliae veniens, cum in crypta quadam ubi sanctorum corpora quiescebant nocte oraret, et sanctae cujusdam tumulum ex alabastro lapide factum inopinabiliter aperiret, et nomen aut meritum ejus scire non posset, piam postea Lutgardem rogavit ut pro revelatione nominis ejusdem Dominum exoraret. Annuens ergo viri precibus totam se ad precandum dedit et statim quod petiit impetravit. Apparens enim ei praedicta sancta dixit: Ego vocor Osanna virgo, filia quondam Regis Scotiae, et per miraculum Domini ad partes Galliae adducta, sancte vixi; defunctaque ibidem ac sepulta solemniter, mei tandem per negligentiam temporis incolae sunt obliti. Haec itaque cum pia Lutgardis dicto viro referret, subjunxit: Vellem ut haec eadem tibi Dominus in testimonium veritatis ostenderet. Et ille: Non sum, inquit, dignus ut mihi talia demonstrentur. Cui illa: Etsi forte minus dignus sis, tamen illa digna est cujus digne praeconia revelentur. Nec mora, super hoc pia Lutgarde orante Dominum, eadem nocte dicto viro per somnum tribus vicibus virgo apparuit, et quod Osanna vocata sit indicavit. Qui vidit testimonium perhibuit, et scimus quia verum est testimonium ejus.

Quomodo cujusdam apostatae reditum ad Ordinem praedixit.

2.35 Quaedam erat in Parco Dominarum, juxta Lovanium, devota monialis quae fratrem carnalem, de Ordine Fratrum Minorum duodecim annos apostatam, inconsolabiliter deplangebat. Rogata est ergo pia Lutgardis ut pro dicto apostata rogaret Dominum, quia soror ejus prae dolore sensum perdere putabatur. Illa vero compassa utrique, oravit ad Dominum et ab oratione reversa dixit: Dicatur illi bonae puellae ut fiducialiter consoletur, quia frater suus est isto anno ad suum sanctum ordinem reversurus. Quod ita factum inopinate sane percepimus, utpote de illo qui multipliciter fuerat seculi actibus irretitus.

Nec legentes moveat si de Ordine Fratrum Minorum aut aliorum per apostasiam aliqui exciderunt; neque enim aliquis istorum major est, nec longe tantus, quam ipsa habitatio Christi, in qua undecim boni perfidum Judam iam toleraverunt; aut melior quam ipsum caelum, unde angeli ceciderunt.

Quomodo Ducissae Brabantiae mortem praedixit.

2.36 Eodem fere in tempore illustris Ducissa Brabantiae, filia quondam Philippi Regis Franciae, graviter infirmabatur. Ex longo autem tempore piam Lutgardem dilectam habens, mandavit ei ut pro se Dominum exoraret. Quae statim facta oratione remandavit ei quod nullo modo de lecto surgeret, sed se per confessionem in omnibus praepararet, et cum maxima cordis fiducia

¹ AS ei RV mihi (*fortasse legi debet expectavit...ei*)

² Psalm 40:1 (Vulg. 39:2)

Dominum expectaret. Nec mora, sicut illa praedixit, ducissa defuncta est. Post mortem autem pia Lutgardi ducissa apparuit, et quia per intercessionem gloriosae Virginis Mariae, quam in vita miro modo dilexerat, ultra speratum poenis purgatorii eriperetur, certissimis indiciis indicavit.

Haec quidem, venerabili et Deo devota Margareta, Domina de Velpia, referente, didici et conscripsi. Sed et idem accidit de viro nobili Domino Godefrido, filio Domini Godefridi Castellani Bruxellensis, cujus obitum, antequam sciretur aliunde, sororibus nuntiavit.

Quomodo cuidam mulieri tentationem occultam praedixit, et liberavit eam.

2.37 Reclusa de Curia S. Stephani, in puellari¹ aetate gravissimum tentationis incommodum sentiens, piam Lutgardem ut pro se oraret adivit. Cujus incommodum cum ipsa quaereret et illa dicere vereretur, dixit ei pia Lutgardis: Ecce, Dominus mihi quod verecundaris dicere revelavit; et haec dicens totum puellae cordis sui statum, quod etiam presbyteris revelare noluerat, patefecit. Exhortata ergo confiteri, eam ad confessionem peccatorum et morum correctionem ita perfecte sanatam et consolatam ab omni incommodo dereliquit, ut in maxima postmodum spiritus alacritate et gaudio Domino deserviret.

Idem et per omnia fere consimile fratri Werico, converso de Aquiria, accidisse probatum est. Quid miri? Secum enim habebat illum in spiritu cujus lucidiores sunt oculi super solem. Quod in facto patuit quod subjungo. Quidam peccatum commiserat in abditissimo loco, quod revelare presbytero verebatur. Et ecce non diu post, quidam in specie peregrini rogabat illum ut, causa remissionis peccati quod plus timeret, sibi caput lavare deberet. Quod cum ille facere jam coepisset, invenit in summo capitis peregrini oculum lucidissimum, et clamavit: O hominem, contra naturam in vertice capitis oculatum! Cui peregrinus: Hic est, inquit, oculus qui te peccantem in abscondito vidit, et quem nulla possunt secreta latere. Haec dicens ab oculis mirantis evanuit.

Quomodo quemdam, vexatum in confessionibus audiendis, precibus liberavit.

2.38 Sollicita supra modum pia Lutgardis fuit notos sacerdotes cum mira oris gratia frequentius admonere, gregem sibi creditum sollicite procurare, et animas quas Christus redemit a servitute daemonum liberare. Ego autem, licet indignus, cum ad ordinem presbyteri aetate juvenis accessissem, nondum me in Praedicatorum Ordine constituto, indebite et super vires, in confessionibus audiendis vices habere episcopi sum compulsus. Hoc autem cum in magna cordis formidine inchoassem, coepi, vexatis exterius auribus ex auditu, internis tentationum stimulis agitari. Maximo ergo timore et horrore correptus, ad piam Lutgardem sicut ad specialissimam mihi matrem accessi, et ei gravamen meum dolore tactus aperui. Quae compassa mihi in orationem se dedit, et rediens cum magna fiducia dixit: Revertere, fili, in locum tuum, et laborem debitum animabus curandis impende. Aderit tibi Christus protector et doctor, qui et in confessionibus audiendis a jaculis inimici te potenter eripiat, et in defectu scientiae quem vereris addet gratiam ampliorem.

¹ AS puellarii RV puellaris

Mira res: et licet ego ipsemet de meipso cum verecundia referam, ad laudem tamen Christi et ancillae ejus quod factum est non tacebo. Ab illa igitur die, quamdiu injuncto officio usus sum usque in praesens, quo sedecim anni fluxerunt medii, prophetiam piae Lutgardis in me veracissimam sum expertus; etsi extra tempus, quando audiendis confessionibus non eram intentus, frequenter intolerabiliter sum vexatus. Et quanto immundiora fuerint quae audio, tanto minus ea curo, minusque moveor audiendo.

Quomodo duo angeli visi sunt deducere eam ad altare, et alia vice ante mortem B.V. Maria et B. Joannes Baptista¹ adstare ei ex utroque latere.

2.39 Ut autem aliquibus, quae minus forte digne de ea in Aquiria sentiebant, piae Lutgardis meritum monstraretur, accidit hoc miraculum solemne quod narro. Solita erat omni die Dominico Dominici corporis refici sacramento. Cumque euntem ad altare nullus eam in subsidium debilis corporis sustentaret, manifeste viderunt aliquae, quibus videre datum est, duos eam angelos mediam tenere et ad altare deducere. Consimili modo et alia vice manifestissime visum est gloriosissimam virginem Mariam et beatum Joannem Baptistam eam in obsequio comitari; sed hoc diu postea, cum scilicet tempus instaret quo debuit ex hoc mundo transferri.

Quomodo ignotae linguae scientiam habuit in consolatione cujusdam mulieris quae desperata fuerat; et quomodo liberata est per eam.

2.40 Tribulatos et tentatos confortare et roborare cum mira sollicitudine nitebatur; et revera mirum in modum gratiam ei in hoc Deus ipse contulerat, ut nullus ab ea vel tentatus vel tribulatus sine alleviatione discederet. Veniens ergo quaedam mulier, ab omni spe veniae penitus desperata, locutorium introivit. Rogabant autem moniales ut consolationem reciperet et spem in Deum poneret, qui non vult mortem peccatoris sed ut convertatur et vivat. Illa autem casso labore fugere nitebatur; retenta tamen ea rogabant ut expectaret piam Lutgardem, quae etsi ei ad consolationem loqui non posset, tamquam Teutonica, pro ea tamen Dominum exoraret; erat autem mulier penitus Gallica. Nec mora, pia Lutgardis adducta ad remotum locum cum muliere secessit; sensit enim in spiritu supra modum feminam tribulatam. Mirari omnes ac ridere coeperunt, quomodo ignotae sibi invicem linguae in colloquio convenirent. Postquam ergo ibidem diutius consedisent, surrexit mulier, ad plenissimam spei fiduciam revocata, et reversa in locutorium monialibus dixit: Cur dixistis istam sanctissimam dominam esse Teutonicam, quam prorsus Gallicam sum experta? Neque enim est sub caelo alia quae me verbis suis revocare ad spem veniae potuisset.

Nec mirum si ad horam ignotae sibi invicem linguae in colloquio convenerunt, cum Lutgardis plena erat illo spiritu qui discipulos in unum congregatos linguarum diversitate replevit. Refert Pater Bernardus quod vidit eam et virum venerabilem ac Deo dignum Magistrum² Guiardum Cameracensem Episcopum, qui penitus linguam Teutonicam, sicut et ipsa Gallicam, ignorabat, mutuo colloquentes et invicem intelligentes. Vidi unam quae in die Pentecostes ab hora tertia

¹ AS Mariae....Joannis Baptistae

² AS Magistrum de RV Magistrum

usque ad vesperam omnium linguarum notitiam habuit. Sed hanc adhuc prodere nolo, quia adhuc in vita degit.

Quomodo diutius flenti pro peccatoribus apparuit Dominus, et manu propria abstersit lacrymas ab oculis ejus.

2.41 Lamentis diutius pro peccatoribus se affligens, adeo facies ejus quotidie rigabatur ut secundum Hieremiam Prophetam, oculi ejus fontem lacrymarum deducere viderentur.¹ Hic dolor, hic gemitus tam ineffabilis videntibus erat ut vixdum quis sine gravi dolore cordis cernere praevaleret. Cum igitur placuit misericordiarum Domino eam in talibus mitigari, apparuit ei in fletibus rugienti, et congratulans ei quod miserorum negotium diu fideliter egisset, manu ipsa quam pro peccatoribus in cruce extendit, a facie ejus lacrymas tersit, dicens: Consolatam te esse in his lamentis pro meis peccatoribus volo; nec sustinebo te in fletibus ulterius fatigari, sed placido cordis fervore in oratione persistes; et per hoc, sicut quondam per lacrymas, iram Patris dignanter avertes. Hic status in ea usque in diem mortis immobilis perduravit.

Quomodo quinque annis quotidie visitata est ab angelis, et frequenter a matre Domini vel apostolis, et tamen nihil suffecit ei nisi solus Deus.

2.42 Hinc anni quinque fluxerunt, quibus (ut ipsa mihi in magnis lacrymis dixit) quotidie fere ab ipsa matre Christi visitata fuit, sive ab apostolis vel ab aliis specialibus sanctis, exceptis continuis visitationibus angelorum; et tamen in omnibus his perfectam spiritui suo requiem non invenit donec ipsum solum sanctorum sanctum, ineffabiliter omnibus dulciorem, utpote sanctificatorem omnium, inveniret.

Et quid miri? Quid novi? Afficitur pia Lutgardis cum sponsa in Canticis, cujus anima liquefacta est: vulneratur, languet, anhelat, surgit, quaerit per vicos novae gratiae sanctos, et per plateas testamenti veteris patriarchas. Paululum istos pertransiit, quia non longe est ab unoquoque nostrum. Invenit quem diligit anima ejus sublimius acie mentis directa. Sic Petrus pertransiens vigilias civitatis, Heliam, Jeremiam, vel unum ex prophetis, etiam ipsum Joannem Baptistam, ut amicum sponsi conjunctius adhaerentem, invenit quem dilexit, cui dixit: *Tu es Christus filius Dei vivi.*² Christum filium Dei moriturum invenit Petrus; Christum qui surrexit a mortuis et jam non moritur invenit Lutgardis. Illum in passione negatum perdidit Petrus; istum in caelis regnantem invenit et tenuit pia Lutgardis. Tenuit, inquam, eum. Tenuit utique, et ita tenuit, quod non dimittet eum. Quanto enim quaesivit³ ardentius, tanto strictius tenet. Felix quaerens sed felicius tenens. Tenuit eum fide nec dimisit cum mutatione. Nunc autem quaestionis ejus modum triplicem videamus.

Quomodo vixit in triplici statu; et hoc fuit jacere in triplici lectulo Cantici Canticorum.

2.43 Tres lectuli in Canticis Canticorum secundum statum triplicem in anima distinguuntur. Primus est ubi dicitur: *In lectulo meo per noctes quaesivi quem diligit anima mea.*⁴ Secundus est

¹ Jeremias 9:1 Quis dabit capiti meo aquam, et oculis meis fontem lacrimarum

² Matthew 16:16

³ AS quisivit RV quaesivit

⁴ Canticum 3:1

ille lectulus Salomonis, quem *ambiunt sexaginta fortes ex fortissimis Israel*.¹ Tertius est ille de quo dicitur: *Lectulus noster floridus*.² Primus lectulus comparatur statui poenitentiae, qui est status inchoantium; secundus statui pugnae, qui est status proficientium; tertius status vitae contemplativae, qui est status perfectorum. In primo jacet vulneratus; in secundo fatigatus; in tertio delicatus.

In primo igitur, hoc est in lectulo poenitentiae, etsi numquam alicujus peccati mortalis plaga vulnerata sit, pia tamen Lutgardis dilectum perfecte quaesivit quando secundum Psalmistam singulis noctibus peccata ignorantiae suae singulariter planxit, et lectulum conscientiae suae diligentissime lavit, et stratum suum lacrymarum suarum mira ubertate rigavit.

In secundo quoque lectulo, qui est pugnae, pia Lutgardis dilectum quaesivit quando contra carnem pugnans, mira abstinencia et labore eam subegit, mundum extrema paupertate et humilitate devicit, diabolum remediabilibus lacrymis et oratione dejecit. Hunc lectulum sexaginta fortes ex fortissimis Israel ambiebant quando eam non tantum angeli, sicut jam scripsimus, verum etiam ipsa Christi mater cum aliorum sanctorum agminibus protegebant.

In tertio autem lectulo, qui est quietis, pia Lutgardis dilectum perfecte quaesivit quando nec ipsis angelis innitebatur aut sanctis, sed in accubitu solius Sponsi per contemplationem dulciter requievit. Unde cum Isaia dicere potuit: *Coangustatum enim est stratum, ita ut alter decadat; et pallium breve utrumque operire non potest*.³ Hic lectulus *floridus* dicitur, verna multiplicitate virtutum et redolentissima opinionis suavitate respersus; et *noster*, hoc est Sponso tantum et sponsae communis; in eo quod dicere potuit: *Dilectus meus mihi et ego illi, qui pascitur inter lilia*.⁴ Et illud: *Ego dilecto meo, et ad me conversio ejus*.⁵

Quid miri?

Nescit amor Dominum, non novit amor dominari;
Quamlibet altus amet, non amat absque pari.

Alioquin ancilla dici posset, non sponsa, quae utique in figura hujus mysterii in primis parentibus de latere sumpta est, non de pede. Proinde ita spiritus ejus absorbebatur in Deum, ut cum Regina Saba in admiratione deficiens ultra spiritum non haberet, sed tota translata in Deum, instar guttae aquae in dolium vini, unus cum eo spiritus miscebatur. Et hoc est quod Christus ad passionem properans a patre pro his qui credituri essent petiit, dicens: *Sicut tu, Pater, in me, et ego in te, ita et ipsi in nobis unum sint!*⁶

At quoniam secundae hujus editionis librum rebus multimodis, et ut putamus, utilibus in longum extendimus, ut gratius quidem ad pretiosae mortis ejus historiam transeamus, pausationis modicae interstitio respiremus.

¹ Canticum 3:7

² Canticum 1:15

³ Isaiah 28:20

⁴ Canticum 2:16

⁵ Canticum 7:10

⁶ John 17:21

Liber III

Caput I

De eo quod undecim annis ante mortem caeca effecta est; unde consecuta est splendidus lumen interius.

3.1 Nunc ergo libro secundo fideliter executo, tertium quoque de transitu ejus nihilominus inchoamus. Anno ferme undecimo antequam ab hac vita migraret, praeludium quoddam et vitae quietissimae et mortis felicitatis accepit. Instar enim Patriarcharum Isaac et Jacob oculis ambobus orbata, luminis caelestis fulgorem solito perfectius est adeptus. Indignum enim erat ut mens ejus, radiantissimo interius lumine decorata, exterius quodam modo luminis istius tenebris fuscaretur. Quis enim dubitet corporalium rerum imaginibus, quae per oculos foris menti probantur influere, spiritualem mentis aciem non retundi? Caecata ergo foris, tota mente interius in lumine ferebatur.

Hoc solum pia Lutgardis in hac caecitate plangebat, quod spirituales amicos suos in hac vita ulterius non videret; sed hunc mirae simplicitatis affectum cito ab ea Christus sua pietate dimovit, et eos videndos tantum in patria precabatur.

Et in hoc capitulo Frater Bernardus addidit quod ab ejus ore audivit, sibi Dominum respondisse: Caecitatem quidem quam immisi tibi patienter accipias, quia promitto tibi quod sine purgatorio de corpore te assumam. Amicos vero quos te in hac vita causaris amplius non visuram, videndos tibi in aeterna patria conservabo.

Quomodo sanctae memoriae Jordanus, Magister Ordinis Praedicatorum, apparuit ei, et dixit se esse inter apostolorum et prophetarum choros.

3.2 Sub eodem fere tempore sed paulo post, beatae memoriae Jordanus Magister Ordinis Praedicatorum, cum diu visitandi terram sanctam desiderium habuisset, per mare rediens, occulto Dei judicio cum maxima multitudine hominum et duobus ex fratribus ordinis est submersus. Nec mora, a summo caeli fastigio usque ad navem in qua submersus jacebat, columna lucis maxima per spatium quinque horarum divinitus accensa de nocte refulsit; adjectoque litori sacro corpore, caeli lampas super ipsum tertia vice et quarta super socium ejus F. Geraldum resplenduit, sicque lampas rediens nube recepta est. Horum testes fuerunt Catholici Christiani, Graeci schismatici et gentiles.

De his quidam ex nostris, in prosa quae continet gesta ejus, inter cetera plane descripsit, dicens:

Hic terram sanctam adiit
Illic fratres invisere,
Sed cum per mare rediit,
Mergendo coepit psallere

Christumque benedicere,
Sicque caelum mox subiit,
Ut signis datur credere.

Nec mora: mox incanduit
Columna lucis maxima
Quae dum de caelo micuit,
Membra lustrat¹ sanctissima;
Et quo transisset anima
Videntes scire voluit
In re manifestissima.

Adjecto sacro litori
Caeli lampas emicuit,
Quae ter superstans funeri,
Quarto quoque resplenduit
In hunc quem secum habuit,
Et sic recursu celeri
Rapta nube non patuit.

Corpus fragrans mirifice
Curatur a fidelibus.
A Graecis dantur unice,
Latinis et Gentilibus,
Laudes Christo cum fletibus.
Et sic verum magnifice
Sub tribus patet testibus.²

Haec per Fratres Domus Teutonicae, qui ea oculis videre meruerunt, audivimus. Sed et in litteris Prioris Fratrum Praedicatorum apud Venetias haec eadem testata perlegimus.

Quomodo eodem anno in Vigilia Nativitatis Domini dictus Magister Jordanus apparuit ei, et dixit instare mortem ejus.

3.3 Eodem igitur anno, in Vigilia Nativitatis Domini, cum B. Lutgardis a prima hora diei usque ad sextam oraret, et in spiritu quasi tenebras sentiret, taedere coepit in tantum quod in haec verba prorumperet: Domine, quid est quod sentio? Quid est quod patior? Certe si aliquem amicum in caelo vel in terra qui pro me oraret haberem, talem in corde duritiem non sentirem. Haec illa cum lacrymis dicente, ecce subito ante mentis ejus oculos spiritus quidam tam lucidus et tam gloriosus apparuit quod eum prae claritatis magnitudine non agnovit. Cui illa dixit: Quis es, Domine? Et ille: Ego sum, inquit, Frater Jordanus, quondam dictus Magister Ordinis Fratrum Praedicatorum. Ego de hoc seculo ad gloriam transivi, et inter apostolorum et prophetarum choros sublimatus enitui. Ecce missus sum ad te ut in festo isto gratissimo te consolarer. Tu autem jam segura esto de praemio, quia in proximo est ut a Domino coroneris. Psalmum vero,

¹ AS lustravit (*quae lectio metrum corrumpit*) RV lustrans

² The poem is given in full in *Bonum Universale de Apibus* 2.57.51

Deus misereatur nostri,¹ cum Collecta de Spiritu Sancto, quem me vivente et rogante pro nostro ordine dicere promisisti, usque in finem vitae tuae diligenter observa. Cumque pia Lutgardis illum pro quodam ordinis fratre interrogaret, respondit: Pro obedientia quam mihi et dilectione quam tibi exhibuit, in proximo benefaciet ei Deus. Haec dicens disparuit, et eam in tanta consolatione quantam unquam prius habuerat dereliquit.

Haec eadem fere, et si modo dissimili, dictus venerabilis Pater fratri ordinis post obitum revelavit; et quod in ordine sublimium praelatorum in caelo locatus esset, honorabili schemate demonstravit. Igitur dictum venerabilem virum Lutgardis mire in vita dilexerat, et ipse ei super omnes feminas confidebat, adeo ut eam totius Ordinis Praedicatorum matrem constitueret et nutricem; quam etiam super omnes ordines devotam et sedulam vidimus erga fratres, unde et pro eis specialiter quotidie sedulum Deo obsequium exhibebat.

Quomodo tertio septem annos jejunando consummavit.

3.4 Peractis secundario septem annis, quos in pane tantum et olere jejunavit, iterum revelatum est ei ut tertio jejunia votiva susciperet, per quae Deus illud malum averteret quod per quemdam inimicum Ecclesiae Christi imminere certissime verebatur. Ab illo ergo tempore usque in finem vitae suae ita continuavit jejunia ut nullum penitus diem, nec ipsam diem solemnisssimam Paschae, a jejunio praeteriret. Mortua est autem, ut postea plenius exponemus, anno septimo hujus jejunii salutaris. Nec sine fructu jejunii, ut nos certissime jam speramus. Dixit enim mihi, cum pro praedicto periculo graviter formidarem, anno scilicet praecedente quo ex hac vita discessit: Consolari, carissime, poteris, ut confido in eo quod ille² qui dicitur occultus insidiator Ecclesiae aut humiliabitur precibus fidelium, aut in proximo vita excedens pacem Ecclesiae relinquet quam confundere putabatur.

Nondum vidimus quae praedixit, sed vere confidimus jam complenda. Neque enim unum ex omnibus quae futura praedixit per annihilationem in terram vidimus excidisse, utpote illius verba quae de Spiritu Dei hausisse plenissime comprobatur.

Quomodo Cardinalis Jacobus, mortuus in Roma, quarto die raptae in caelum apparuit et dixit se liberatum a Purgatorio.

3.5 Sub eodem fere tempore ille venerabilis et Deo dignus Jacobus, quondam Acconensis Episcopus, tunc vero Romanae Curiae Cardinalis, de quo superius fecimus mentionem, in vigilia SS. Philippi et Jacobi Romae ab hoc seculo transivit. Quarto ergo die depositionis ejus, id est in Festo Crucis, pia Lutgardis rei nescia (utpote tringinta diaetis a loco in Brabantiae scilicet partibus constituta), rapta est ad excessum mentis in caelum et vidit quoniam eadem hora anima dicti episcopi delata est in paradisum. Cui spiritus pia Lutgardis in caelo congratulans, dixit: O reverendissime Pater, nesciebam te defunctum. Tu autem quando a corpore recessisti?³ Et ille: Quarta jam dies est; nam tribus noctibus et duobus diebus in purgatorio jam exegi. Mox illa cum admiratione quaesivit: Et quare, inquit, immediate post mortem mihi superstiti non indicasti, ut poena tua sororum nostrarum orationibus solveretur? Et ille: Noluit, inquit,

¹ Psalm 67:1 (Vulg. 66.2)

² RV ille AS *omittit*

³ AS ponit punctum pro signo interrogationis

Dominus contristari te ex poena mea, sed peracto purgatorio ex liberatione et glorificatione mea te potius consolari. Tu autem in proximo me sequeris. His dictis pia Lutgardis ad se rediit, et diem mortis illius, purgatorium et glorificationem sororibus cum maximo tripudio nuntiavit.

Sed et hinc veritas duos testes habuit, dum fratri Domus Praedicatorum in Roma, ubi prius sepultus fuit, idem quod diximus de purgatorio et glorificatione in quarto die post obitum Dominus revelavit. Frater vero Bernardus ipsa revelante percepit hoc idem illi de pluribus familiaribus accidisse.

Quid hoc evidentius facto? Quid hoc miraculo gloriosius effari poterimus?¹ Quis Judaeus, quis Gentilis incredulitate sua veritatem tam evidentem poterit infirmare? Romae vix obiit et quarta die in Brabantia hoc cognovit. Erubescat ille vilissimus obtrectator, qui dixit et scripsit debere profanos intelligi qui muliercularum scriberent phantasticas visiones. Hoc notare voluit dictum Jacobum venerabilem, qui beatae feminae Mariae de Oignies vitam beatissimam eleganti sermone conscripsit.

Quomodo praedixit annis quinque diem obitus sui.

3.6 Anno quinto ante mortem suam Dominica tertia post diem Pentecostes, Evangelium, *Homo quidam fecit cenam magnam*,² in ecclesia legebatur. Prophetiae ergo spiritu tacta intrinsecus dixit Dominae Sybillae de Gaggis, cui in omnibus ut litteratiori moniali commissa fuerat procuranda: Scire te oportet, carissima, quod in die illa Dominica quando Evangelium hoc legetur, ad cenam nuptiarum Agni transferar jam defuncta. Hoc dicto memorata Sybilla praedictam diem Dominicam, tamquam futuram diem transitus piae Lutgardis, cum summa expectatione praestolabatur. Quae dies ut venerat, nec mori visa est anni ipsius tempore revoluto, dicta Sybilla phantasticam credens, ad tempus oblita est propheticam visionem. At ubi annus quintus, sub eadem quam praedixerat die Dominica, revolutus est, posito defuncto corpore piae Lutgardis in feretro, Evangelium quod praediximus ad Missam conventus matutinalem in ecclesia legebatur. Ad cujus auditum, quod jam diximus Sybilla memorabilis recordata obstupuit, et quomodo istud ante annos quinque pia Lutgardis spiritu prophetico praedixisset, cum admiratione omnium indicavit.

Quomodo quarto anno ante mortem ejus, grassante per multa regna gente Tartarorum, cum timeretur quod ventura esset per totam Teutoniam, praedixit non esse venturam, sed retro abituram.

3.7 Quarto anno ante mortem ejus gens crudelissima Tartarorum, erumpens sedibus suis, destructa majori Hungaria Orientis et minori Hungaria Occidentis, Turciae quoque et Graeciae parte permaxima, utpote Bulgaria atque Ruscia,³ Poloniae etiam potentissimo Duce perempto et terra populoque destructis; cum jam partem Teutoniae invadere, Boemiam scilicet, inchoassent, timor per totam Galliam atque Germaniam maximus erat ne eas sicut et terras alias invaderent atque vastarent. Veniens ergo F. Bernardus, Frater Ordinis Praedicatorum et Poenitentiarius Domini Papae, meticoloso nimirum rumore percussus, rogavit piam Lutgardem

¹ AS *omittit* Quid hoc miraculo gloriosius effari poterimus?

² Luke 14:16

³ AS Rescia RV Ruscia

quatenus instanter oraret Dominum ut¹ a Germaniae finibus flagellum averteret Tartarorum. Et illa: Non coepi, ait, pro² isto negotio rogare Dominum. Certa sum jam quod nunc ad terras istas Tartari non procedent. Quod ita ille accepit ac si de caelo divinitus sonuisset.

Quomodo D. Balduinus de Barbenchon, Prior de Oignies, demonstratus est ei post mortem.

3.8 Circa idem tempus venerabilis Balduinus, dictus de Barbenzon, prior de Oignies, quondam in Aquiria annis pluribus capellanus, verbi Dei solemnissimus praedicator, contra consilium amicorum suorum rebus temporalibus se immiscuit minus digne. Hic gravi infirmitate correptus, pridie quam moreretur digitum beatae Mariae de Oignies sibi praecepit exhiberi. Quo praesente dixit: O veneranda Domina, vivens adhuc in corpore in hora mortis succurrere promisisti. Succurre ergo nunc o Domina, succurre, jam tempus est. Mortuus est ergo idem³ Balduinus et ibidem in Oignies digna veneratione sepultus.

Hujus igitur in obsequiis et exequiis cum frater Bernardus noster interfuisset, et statim sepulto corpore in Aquiriam pervenisset, mox salutato eo in ipso adventu, dixit ei pia Lutgardis: Estne mortuus Dominus Balduinus⁴? Et ille miratus tam inopinatam, tam subitam interrogationem: Mortuus est, inquit, et jam sepultus. Quid tunc ergo? Cui illa: Ecce jam instanti⁵ Domina mea Maria de Oignies mihi apparuit, dicens: Surge, surge, festina, carissima, rogare Dominum quia hora hac anima amici nostri Domini Balduini divino iudicio exhibetur, de commissis et omissis Domino rationem redditura.

Ecce quam verax in testimonio, tam fidelis in promisso, O venerabilis Maria, extitisti, quae piam Lutgardem pro suffragio precum adire prae⁶ omnibus mortalibus voluisti; ut quam potentissimam in animabus a purgatorio liberandis vivens adhuc in corpore testata es, ejus adjutorium pro amico defuncto, in gaudiis sublimata caelestibus, exorares. Benedictus ergo per omnia Deus, qui sanctitatem et merita sponsae tam evidentissimo testimonio voluit declarare.

Vide ergo lector, quam severo iudicio examinandi sunt, qui secundum Isaiam gladium verbi Dei in vomeres laborum temporalium conflant, et pro lanceis invectionum contra peccata, fructum pacis transitoriae ut vacent deliciis metere jam festinant.

Caput II

Quomodo contemplabatur faciem Christi, secundum illud Cantici: Anima mea liquefacta est ut dilectus etc. Invenerunt me.

3.9 Requisita a quodam spirituali et speciali amico suo qualiter Christi faciem in contemplatione videre soleret, respondit: In momento, inquit, apparet mihi splendor inaestimabilis, et quasi fulgur video ejus ineffabilem pulchritudinem glorificationis, quae nisi raptim transiret ab aspectu contemplationis meae, cum vita praesenti hanc sustinere non possem. Post hunc vero

¹ AS et RV ut

² AS modo pro RV pro

³ AS ibidem RV idem

⁴ AS Balduinus RV Balduinus

⁵ RV in instanti AS instanti

⁶ AS pro RV prae

fulgorem splendor intellectualis manet, et cum in ipso splendore quaero quem raptim videram, non invenio.

Nota ergo lector, quod hoc idem est quod in Canticis dicitur: *Anima mea liquefacta est, ut dilectus locutus est. Quaesivi et non inveni illum; vocavi et non respondit mihi.*¹ Quid est Christum loqui in anima, nisi repraesentare illi suae divitias bonitatis, sapientiae et decoris? Ut ex his metiatur anima quam bonum, quamque sapide sapientem, et a virtutibus decoratum eum esse oporteat qui ejus amorem poterit in caritate perpetua promereri. Hunc ergo audiens anima liquescit in desideriis et nititur obtinere quem conspicit; sed quia tempus perfectae visionis nondum venit, illum quem quasi praesentem habuit subito perdit, ut tanto diligentius quaerat, quanto ardentius amat, et tanto ad possidendum mens latior praeparetur, quanto ad quaerendum frequentius innovatur.

Proinde oculos Christi tam radiantissimo lumine coruscare dicebat, ut si possibile esset ipsum lumen solis splendoribus superfundi, tamquam sol stellas et in infinitum magis solis radios offuscaret. Et hoc est quod quodam religioso sacerdote scire desiderante² quid esset dicere *Pulchriores sunt oculi ejus vino,*³ monstrata est ei in sancto calice, ubi divina mysteria celebrabat, facies Christi, cujus oculi tanto splendore luminis radiabant ut totum mundum possent, etiam in tenebris constitutum, magis quam mille soles illustrare.

De ipso autem spiritu veritatis edoctus quidam vitae spiritualis expertissimus praedicator, dixit quod numquam sicut piam Lutgardem aliquem in vita cognovit, ita perfecte per fidem migrantem in intellectum et affectum. Quod et ipse protestor, sicut et scripturis et relatione quorundam spiritualium ex parte conjicio, licet ego sum homuncio talis luminis inexpertus. Et quidem facile credi non posset quantis videndi Christum desideriis aestuabat. Vidi ipse in hoc aliquando lacrymas ejus tantas quod vix eas aliquis sine lacrymis sustinere valeret. Accidit autem biennio antequam migraret a seculo quod frater noster Bernardus, in Aquiriam veniens, eam jam per mensem infirmatam et sacramento unctionis, quasi quotidie ad exitum, praeparatam invenit. Ex ardentissimo enim desiderio videndi Christum menti ejus insederat quod ad Dominum tunc transire debebat. Nullum ergo signum mortis in ea dictus frater reperiens, ad illam tanto desiderio suspensam dixit: Non videtur mihi, carissima, quod modo ex hoc seculo transeas. Quem illa anxio vultu reverberans: Non sic, ait, carissime, dicas, quia valde desidero Christum Dominum revelata facie contemplari. Et ille subridens: Non revera, mater carissima, non erit hoc modo. Cui illa, elevatis ad caelum oculis: Si, inquit, modo non erit, fiat voluntas ejus cras. Tunc de lectulo surgam et ejus corpus in solamen accipiam.

Quomodo audiente moniale facta est vox super eam, Deliciae meae esse cum filiis hominum.

¹ Canticum 5:6

² AS quidam religiosus presbyter scire desiderans

³ Genesis 49:12

3.10 Die quodam cum anima pia Lutgardis ad pietatem inclinata¹ Christo in contemplatione sincerius jungeretur, facta est vox super eam, audiente quadam devotissima moniali, dicens: *Deliciae meae sunt esse cum filiis hominum.*²

Quid miri? Quid novi? Paradisum paradisorum Augustinus, contemplativorum maximus, fidelem et devotam animam nuncupavit, et merito. In creatione enim caeli et terrae, verbo tantum dixit et facta sunt; in recreatione vero animae, dilapsae per peccatum Adae, quantum laborem triginta tribus annis usque ad ignominiosam mortem Christus sustinuit, quis aestimare sufficiet? Verum Deum et verum hominem haec quidem sustinuisse non ambigo: sed quanti pendendus sit ille pro quo talis talia tantaque³ sustinuit, ad plenum umquam⁴ quis sufficiet admirari? Maxime tamen⁵ ille qui vicem pro posse rependens, ea quae desunt passioni Christi in carne sua non desinit adimplere? Quod Lutgardem fecisse magnopere, nemo dubitat qui hanc novit; nullus ambigit qui haec legit. Secundum praecedentia ergo, quid Christo Dei filio nostris temporalibus delicatius esse potuit quam Lutgardis? Si fuerit, nescio; Deus scit. Unum scio, *credidi propter quod locutus sum*,⁶ quod nullam me talem vel legisse meminerim vel audisse.

Quomodo anno uno ante mortem ejus, Christus tantum tria requirebat ab ea.

3.11 Anno paulo plus quam uno ante mortem suam apparuit ei Dominus Jesus Christus, vultu illi congratulantis applaudens, et dixit: Jam instat finis laboris tui; nolo te a me diutius separari. Tria tantum anno isto requiro a te. Primo⁷ quidem, ut referas gratias pro beneficiis jam adeptis, et in hoc requiras suffragia beatorum. Secundum est, quod pro peccatoribus meis te totaliter effundas in orationibus apud Patrem. Tertium est, quod venire ad me sine aliqua alia sollicitudine hianti desiderio concupiscas.

Penses ergo, lector, quanti apud Deum meriti fuit, cujus calcaneo quando antiquus serpens insidiari debuit, hujus mentem Deus tantum tribus sollicitudinibus occupavit.

Quomodo Paschali tempore ante mortem apparuit ei Dominus Christus cum Maria matre sua et praedixit ei mortem suam.

3.12 Paschali tempore proximo ante mortem suam apparuit ei Dominus Jesus Christus cum gloriosa matre sua in maxima gloria claritatis. Cumque pia Lutgardis (ut fere semper) vitae praesentis exilium et desiderium supernae patriae causaretur, dixerunt ei: Non te oportet, carissima, ab hoc praesenti tempore ulterius fatigari. Jam tibi remedium perpetuae pacis disponitur ad coronam, nec te volumus amodo diutius expectare.

Haec pia Lutgardis saepe dictae Sybillae de Gaggis, statim ut revelationem Domini accepit, cum maximo timore et exultatione praedixit. Sicut enim nullam habuit in omnibus cariore, ita

¹ RV inclinatae AS inclinata

² Proverbs 8:31

³ AS pro quo iste talia tantaque RV pro quo talia talis tantaque

⁴ RV ad ple numquam AS ad plenum numquam

⁵ AS cum RV tamen

⁶ Psalm 116.10 (Vulg. 115:10)

⁷ AS Primo mo

nullam in omnibus familiariorem. Et merito, quia secundum praeceptum supradicti venerabilis Jacobi, ejusdem Sybillae consilio, ut magis litteratae, in omnibus regebatur.

Quomodo diebus quindecim ante mortem ejus apparuerunt ei B.V. Maria et B. Joannes Baptista et quidam amici ejus speciales qui jam defuncti erant, praedicentes ei excessum mortis: et gloriosissima responsio ejus, quomodo poterat cognoscere ac discernere inter sanctos qui in multitudine apparebant.

3.13 Quindecim diebus ante mortem suam apparuit ei gloriosa virgo Maria et beatissimus Baptista Joannes, quem amore specialissimo diligebat, qui et dixerunt ei: Jam instat consummatio tua, superest tibi corona justitiae. Nolumus te hic esse diutius, omnes enim cives caelici te expectant.

Sed et sancti apparuerunt ei anno illo frequenter in magna multitudine et praedicebant ei excessum quem completura esset instantius. Nec non et ei quidam amicorum ejus specialium¹ qui jam praedeceperant apparebant, gaudere se magnifice protestantes quod eis sociaretur in proximo migratura.

Haec cum dixisset quibusdam amicis suis, quaesitum est ab ea quomodo discernere posset inter sanctos. Et illa: De ipso, inquit, Christo sanctorum sancto quidam animae illucens splendor egreditur, in quo unumquemque sanctorum qui apparet mihi perfecte cognosco.

Nota igitur lector, quod nihil aliud splendorem istum intelligo nisi speculum Trinitatis vel aeternitatis. Sicut enim liber Sapientiae capitulo septimo dicit: *Candor est lucis aeternae, et speculum sine macula Dei majestatis, et imago bonitatis illius; et cum sit una, omnia potest, et permanens in se omnia innovat, et per nationes in animas sanctas se transfert, amicos Dei et prophetas constituens.*²

Sanctos ergo cum apparebant illi rogabat obnixius ut gratias referrent Deo pro ea et pro beneficiis collatis sibi ab eo.

Quomodo sorores quae erant in infirmaria redarguit, et praedixit quod post mortem ejus Dominus corriperet eas, et qualiter hoc factum est.

3.14 Frequenter sorores in infirmaria moniales redarguerat, eo quod minus bene et minus attente canonicas horas Deo solverent divinitus constitutas. Cumque anno dimidio ante mortem suam correctionem plenariam, secundum quod divinae reverentiae congruebat, in ceteris non videret, dixit: Scio quod post obitum defectum istum in sororibus manus Domini vindicabit, et tunc verbi mei memores et flagelli humiliter corrigentur, et mox retrahet manum Dominus quam extenderat in vindictam. Quam veraci spiritu haec fuerint prophetata non est qui ambigat. Statim enim ut pia Lutgardis beata morte defuncta est, pestilentia gravis in conventu monialium mox grassatur, et infra brevissimi temporis spatium numero quatuordecim moniales probatissimae sunt defunctae. Ego enim sub eo tempore ibidem veni, et duas spiritu carneque sorores uno spatii momento migrantes, celebrata pro eis missa in uno tumulo sepelivi. Nec mora post haec, cum se debiles in infirmaria in dicendis sollicite horis plenissime

¹ RV spiritualium

² Sapientia 7:26-27

correxissent, manum suam, secundum quod pia Lutgardis praedixerat, Domino misericorditer revocante, pestilentia mox cessavit.

Rogo ergo vos, o Aquiriae dominae et sorores, ut piam Lutgardem in omnibus dictis quae observare poteritis observetis, exemplorumque ejus inhaerere vestigiis, et spero quod ejus precibus pervenietis ad palmam, et in hoc exemplum sumite quod subjungo.

Quomodo amicus quidam ejus secularis graviter peccaverat, et meruit indulgentiam per preces ejus; et non solum ipse, sed omnes quos ipsa dilexit, et qui eam diligebant et spem haberent in ea, benefaceret eis Dominus propter eam.

3.15 De specialibus amicis ejus quidam vir secularis in grave peccatum inciderat. Faciens ergo confessionem suam, poenitentiam quidem peccati fecit, sed nullam indulgentiae consolationem in oratione sentire promeruit. Quapropter in voraginem desperationis fere cadebat. Veniens autem ad piam Lutgardem quasi ad propriam matrem, quid egisset et quid pro scelere sustineret gravi moerore conquestus est. At illa semel, iterato ac tertio pro peccatore orationem effundens, nullum secundum quod solebat responsum a Domino accepit. Ille vero in nullo se habere melius sentiebat. Hoc viso pia Lutgardis in oratione cum Domino mira spiritus instantia luctabatur. Tandem vero, ubi in ira Dominum misericordias continentem evincere non valebat, dixit: Aut dele me de libro vitae aut dimittas illi noxam hanc. Nec mora, in voce hac Dominus ad misericordiam inclinatus dixit: Ecce dimisi illi quia confisus est de te; et non solum illi, sed et omnibus qui spem habent in te et diliguntur a te, benefaciam propter te. Ad haec igitur Dei verba, mox homo ille spem veniae perfecte recipiens, ad statum gratiorem et magis pacatum quam ante lapsum, Domino propitiante, pervenit.

Quomodo mortua fuit et quid egit in morte; et quomodo dixit exercitum caelestem esse in claustris, quando intrabat mors.

3.16 Hinc ergo, quantum ad ipsam, dies sequitur exultationis et laudis; ad nos vero et omnes illos qui ejus patrocinii solatio vivebamus, dies luctus, dies gemitus et moeroris; dies, inquam, quem ego infelicissimus omnium nec praeanticipare, ut saepius eam rogaveram, morte potui, nec subsequi possum, omni miserior orphano derelictus.

Venit ergo dies, vigilia scilicet Octavarum sanctae et individuae Trinitatis, et gravi admodum sed lenta febre decubuit Trini Dei individua veneratrix. Ingravescente autem morbo exercebatur. Secunda feria sequenti quidam conversus Affligemiensis, Wilhelmus nomine (praecipue enim illius monasterii fratres, propter religionis observantiam, diligebat) intravit ad eam visitationis gratia, et inter verba alia dixit: Utinam Dominus noster abbas sciret vos adeo graviter infirmari. Et illa: Cras, inquit, veniet ille carissimus meus et videbit me. Ad quod ille, responsum cum inopinabile duceret, admiratus conticuit.

Et mane facto, cum dictus abbas venerabilis ad duo milliaria prope transiret, et infirmari piam Lutgardem penitus ignoraret, dixit his qui secum erant: Eamus videre Dominam Lutgardem, quia eam elapso jam longo tempore non vidi. Venit ergo in Aquiriam, et cum intrasset ad eam, illa sincerissime gratulata, et de lectulo relevata resedit, tenensque manum ejus dixit: Jam recedo, carissime, et nihil sub caelo carius te relinquo; de te autem a Domino me noveris consolatam.

Hoc dicto in alia distractus abbas discessit, et illa usque in feriam quintam magna spiritus alacritate remansit. Quinta ergo feria, cum vocem saepe dictae Sybillae de Gagis intrantis audisset, dixit: Sedeas hic juxta cor meum. Ecce plenum est claustrum militia¹ caelestis exercitus. Animae beatorum praesentes sunt, et multae sororum nostrarum quae ab hoc seculo praecesserunt. Haec dicens conticuit, et deinceps per totam sextam feriam vultu gratiosissimo, in Dei tantum contemplatione spiritu rapta, permansit. Sabbato autem cum iam² hora mortis instaret, oculos ad caelos aperuit, et sacramentis praemunita sanctificis, in medium juvenicularum tympanistiarum principibus caelestis exercitus commixtis psallentibus, anima felix ad liberas auras exultans, evolat ad superna; anno ab Incarnatione Domini millesimo, ducentesimo, quadragesimo sexto, mense Junio, sexto decimo Cal. Julii; Indictione quarta, anno aetatis suae sexagesimo quarto, hora circa vesperam, regnante D.N. Jesu Christo, cui est honor et gloria cum patre et spiritu sancto, per immortalia secula seculorum, Amen.

Quomodo ante mortem oculos apertos postea non reclusit; et quid senserunt aliquae in morte ejus; et qualis fuit facies ejus in morte et post mortem.

3.17 At ubi spiritum efflavit pia Lutgardis extremum, nonnullae ex monialibus, quibus hoc datum optimum a Deo concessum est, tanta spiritus dulcedine, tanta alacritate repletae sunt ut se non caperent prae stupore, et nimirum perfecte sentirent quod cum immenso tripudio supernorum, ipse praesentialiter salutis nostrae princeps Jesus animam illius ad delicias evocaverit paradisi.

Proinde proprium ex natura morientium est ut in morte livido pallore nigrescant; pia autem Lutgardis, in signum innocentiae virginalis, candorem in morte cum nitore lili in facie praetendebat. Oculos in caelum (ut dictum est) instante hora mortis diu ante clausos aperuit, nec eos postea in morte vel post mortem reclusos habere potuit, quia ipse oculorum gestus iter per quod transierat spiritus indicavit. Cutis autem totius corporis ejus tantae lenitatis a contrectantibus est reperta ut sub palpantis manu byssus pariter candens et lenis plenissime crederetur.

Nimirum³ simplex haec sine felle columba lotos lacte puritatis oculos habuit, quae speculabatur residens juxta fluentia plenissima.

Caput III

Quomodo quaedam soror habuit manum impotentem, et per attactum corporis ejus, ubi lavabatur, sanata est.

3.18 Igitur cum sacrum cadaver exanime lavaretur, quaedam soror, quae per annos plures usum penitus manus amiserat, casu et non ex proposito manu perdita inter lavandum corpus attigit, et subito in plenum omnis operis usum restituta est sanitati.

Ecce quam subito, quam plane, sicut superius diximus, venerabilis Mariae de Oignies prophetiae verbum impletum est, ubi in morte agens de pia Lutgarde praedixit: Spiritualia

¹ AS militiae RV militia

² AS in RV iam

³ AS nemirum RV nimirum

miracula in vita nunc facit; corporalia post mortem efficiet. Dignum utique et revera dignissimum, ut quem pia Lutgardis in sanctis suis vita mirabilem praedicavit, ille Deus eam evidentibus signis etiam post mortem mirabilem exhiberet.

Quomodo multis annis praedixerat quod mihi sufficere deberet minor digitus suus post mortem suam, qui manum ejus affectaveram, et quam miraculose hoc adimpletum sit.

3.19 Annis pluribus ante mortem ejus plures moniales et conversos fratres instanter rogaveram ut si contingeret, sicut heu! contigit, me in morte piae Matris Lutgardis non esse praesentem, manum ejus abscissam mihi, ob sacram ejus memoriam, reservarent, et in hoc licentiam venerabilis Hawide ejusdem loci abbatisae obtinueram. Ut autem feminarum natura est, celanda penitus celare non posse, secundum illud vulgare proverbium,

*Scilicet ut taceas, femina si qua potest;*¹

moniales piae Lutgardi quid de abscindenda manu illius ordinaveram indicarunt. Nec multo post, cum in Aquiriam veniens cum ea habere colloquium incepissem, ipsa me vultu intuens serioso dixit: Audivi, fili carissime, quia manum mihi post mortem abscindere jam disponis; tu autem quid de manu mea facere cogites multum miror. Ego igitur rubore perfusus: Credo, inquam, quod in bonum animae et corporis mei tua mihi manus obveniet, si eam consequar ut intendo. Tunc illa sereno, ut erat, vultu subridens, et auricularium digitum dextrae manus in subliminari fenestrae in qua colloquebamur deponens: Satis, inquit, tibi sufficiet, cum istum digitum post mortem meam habere potueris. Tum ego confidentius jam invectus: Nihil, inquam, mihi ex tuo, Mater, corpore sufficere poterit, nisi manum aut caput habeam, quo tunc relever te orbat. His dictis ad alia verba descendimus, nihil alicui inde dicens, nihilque ponderans aut advertens.

Ergo illa defuncta, ubi nondum adhuc elato in ecclesiam corpore in infirmaria servabatur, quidam Guido devotissimus juvenis et alius socius suus, fratres conversi, piae Lutgardi manum abscindere cogitabant; sed cum hoc praesumere non auderent, eundem digitum dextrae manus quem mihi sufficere dixerat amputarunt, et dentes de ore ejus numero sexdecim extraxerunt. Cognita autem morte ejus, et digitum amputatum audiens, nec quis digitorum esset intelligens: Nunc, inquam, videbo lucidius si vere propheta pia Lutgardis esse probabitur, quae dextrae manus suae auricularium mihi sufficere ante annos plurimos jam praedixit. Veni ergo in Aquiriam et eundem, sicut praedixerat, amputatum inveni, et per omnia mihi sufficere eum et felicem me fore si hunc obtinere possem sollicitus cogitavi.

Super eo ergo abbatissam adiens, preces supplices cum lacrymis fudi, sed cum magno dolore meo solam ipsam abbatissam inexorabilem mox inveni; credo tamen quod non sine dispensatione superni consilii. Probare enim Omnipotens ordinabat ut secundum promissum piae Lutgardis ejus digitum obtinerem, quem nescia simplicitas denegarat. Iterato autem secundum tempus in Aquiriam veni, vitamque piae Lutgardis scribere promittens, cum ingenti cordis laetitia super aurum et argentum optatum munus accepi.

Nec me in hoc invidus aliquis mordeat aut judicet arguendum, si piae Lutgardis, nondum adhuc canonizatae, digitum tanto amore complector, quia beatissima Natalia Adriani martyris mox

¹ RV potes

occisi brachium abscidit. Venerabilis quoque Mariae de Oignies, nondum canonizatae, digitum in morte praecisum, pia memoriae quondam Aconensis Episcopus, et postea Romanae Curiae Cardinalis, annis multis ad collum suspensum pro maximo munere sollemnis memoriae Papae Gregorio nono, contra blasphemiae spiritum quo atrociter tentabatur, portandum dedit. Beatae quoque Elizabeth Thuringiae Lantgraviae, nostro tempore defunctae, pollex cum indice mox abscissus fuit. Quod autem in S. Natalia et memorabili viro Jacobo Cardinali et in Gregorio Romanae urbis Pontifice et aliis multis fide dignis tanta auctoritate praecessit, nullus in me quasi factum stultum et impium, nisi plane stultus et impius, iudicabit.

Quomodo corpus sepultum fuit.

3.20 Ex hinc, cum sacrum corpus ejus sepeliendum jaceret in feretro, quaestio mota est ubi tantae et tam solemnes reliquiae conderentur. Et accidit ut ex ordinatione divina venerabilis Abbas de Alna, pater et visitator secundum ordinem ipsius monasterii,¹ ex triduo ante sepulturam pia Lutgardis, et maxime exitum expectaret. Mota ergo quaestione ubi deceret thesaurum tam pretiosissimum tumulari, respondit abbas: Et ubi, inquit, nisi in ecclesia, ubi digne possit ab omnibus frequentari. Sane per omnia et provide respondit et digne, secundum ea quae ipsamet in vita praedixerat. Cum enim magis familiares ejus in Aquiria moniales ab ea in vita quaesissent quid facerent ipsa mortua, quae tanto² orationum ejus suffragio frustrarentur, respondit: Ad tumultum, inquit, meum confugite. Ibi vobis adero mortua sicut vivens. Quam vero et prophetico spiritu ista praedixerit, nullum ambigo jam nescire qui fido corde ejus adjutorium invocavit. Ubi autem hoc convenientius fieri debuit, nisi in deputato loco ubi adhaerere Deo in oratione et contemplatione consuevit. Obtinuit ergo verbum abbatis consensum omnium, et in dextro chori latere, juxta parietem ubi orare consueverat, in loco solemnem et honorifico, sepelitur. Dicta autem Sybilla de Gagis, epitaphii more versificans, dixit:

Lutgardis luxit; vitam sine crimine duxit;
Cum Christo degit quam lapis iste tegit.

Esuriens haec et sitiens caelestia, luxit;
Mera dies, sponsi facies, ilii modo luxit.

Haec speculum vitae, flos claustrum, gemma sororum;
Fulsit in hac pietas, compassio, gloria morum.

Quomodo apparuit cuidam moniali, et quomodo sine purgatorio dixit se transivisse, et liberasse multas animas de purgatorio; et praedixit aliam morituram, et mortua est immediate post.

3.21 Nec mora, postquam sepulta est apparuit cuidam Elizabeth de Wans, in Aquiria moniali, quae quondam in Campania Galliae apud S. Desiderium fuerat abbatissa. Apparentem autem in magna gloria sciscitata est dicens: O dulcissima Domina, numquid per aliquid temporis spatium purgatorium pertulisti? Et illa: Non solum sine purgatorio ad requiem transii, verum etiam cum ante purgatorium haberem transitum, afflictis ibidem compatiens benedixi, et multas animas, ex beneficio divino poenis exemptas, ad amoenitatem mecum transtuli paradisi.

¹ RV pater. . . monasterii ac visitator AS Pater monasterii Visitator

² AS tanta RV tanto

Haec ea dicente, visum est dictae Elisabeth quod cuidam juvenculae moniali, Machtildi nomine, adhuc viventi pia Lutgardis diceret: Sequere me. Per quod illa intelligens quod eam per mortem juvencula sequeretur, seipsam quoque ad sequendum Elizabeth offerebat, dicens: Liceat etiam me te sequi, mater dulcissima. Et pia Lutgardis: Non potes, inquit, me modo sequi, sed postmodum me matrem sequeris filia. Quae visio statim effectum habuit. Nam juvencula quae a pia Lutgarde invitata est ad sequendum infra dies novem defuncta est; Elizabeth vero, quae se ad sequendum obtulit nec cui sequi concessum est, supervivit.

Quomodo pestem, quae inter moniales secundum prophetiam ejus venerat, visa est sedasse in visione cujusdam monialis.

3.22 Praeterea, cum secundum prophetiam piae Lutgardis inter moniales Aquiriae dira pestis morientium grassaretur, quaedam de monialibus in visione vidit quod multi ecclesiam monasterii insolenter irruerent. Et cum nullus eos prohibere ab insolentia potuisset, vidit quod pia Lutgardis surrexit de tumulo et omnes cum maxima violentia ab ecclesia propulsaret. Nec mora, effectum suum visio beata consequitur, et ab insolentia pestilentis contagii Aquiriae monasterium liberatur.

Quomodo nobilis puella Beatrix sanata est per velum ejus.

3.23 Raptim unaquaque monialium quidquid de cingulis, de peplis, velis, ac rebus aliis habere potuerunt quasi pro reliquiis, et revera maximis reliquiis, distraxerunt. Nobilissima autem puella Beatrix de Roania monialis, quae patrimonio suo monasterium Aquiriae copiosissime a pauperie relevavit, anthracem, quem carbunculum physici dicunt, in collo habens, velum capitis piae Lutgardis circa collum posuit et perniciose turgens inflatio visibiliter mox aufugit.

Iuste quidem, o pia Lutgardis, et digne per omnia hoc fecisti, ut tua post mortem spiritualia meteret, cujus in hac vita temporalia suscepisti.

Quomodo D. Alardus Capellanus sanatus est.

3.24 Dominus Alardus, ibidem annis plurimis capellanus, cum pollicem inflatum in magna quidem anxietate doleret, pollici inflato piae Lutgardis reliquias alligans, remedium doloris et inflationis sensibiliter mox probavit.

Quomodo Oda Suppriorissa sanata est.

3.25 Oda Suppriorissa Aquiriae, cum manum graviter doleret inflatam, circumligans piae Lutgardis reliquias sensit continuo remedium perfectissimae sanitatis.

Quomodo quaedam monialis probat virtutem ejus in liliis positis ad tumulum ejus.

3.26 Ejusdem nominis consanguinea mea, nata de oppido Brania, monialis, cum ex debilitate capitis qua diu vexata est nullum prorsus odorem lili recipere potuisset, et ad tumulum piae Lutgardis lilia ponerentur, horruit quidem ipso aspectu. Sed cum solum caput ad tentandum

ingressum¹ ostii posuisset nullumque gravamen adverteret, mox confidentius introgressa, loco haesit, tumulum adiit, lilia naribus admovit et nullum penitus capitis dolorem sensit.

Eadem monialis, cum nocte quadam in tenebris ad piaae Lutgardis sepulchrum orandi gratia se prosterneret, offendit oculo ferrum acuminatum candelabri, manumque mox objecit oculo, ut orbiculam ejus quasi loco erutam ne penitus caderet retineret. Dolore igitur intolerabili coarctata dixit: Quid est, o sancta mater Lutgardis, quod mihi accidit? In veneratione tui procidens, oculum perdidi, quem custodire debueras, et inde molestiam retuli unde remedium praestolabar. Haec dicens surrexit, et momentaneo unius horae spatio plenissime restituta sanitati, nihil languoris pertulit vel doloris.

Quomodo Maria de Andena a dolore capitis validissimo per velum ejus sanata est subito.

3.27 Maria de Audena, Aquiriae Monialis, cum gravissimo dolore capitis torqueretur, ita quod nullo prorsus corporis membro posset vel ad momentum quiescere et se per terram impatientius volutaret, mirantibus omnibus, qui eam subito sensum perdere cogitabant, velo piaae Lutgardis in tantum visibiliter mox curatur ut nullus in ea dolor penitus remaneret.

Quomodo cingulo ejus quaedam matrona liberata est in partu periculose laborans; et hoc idem expertae sunt multae aliae.

3.28 Matrona quaedam nobilis cum in partu diutissime et periculosissime laborasset, allato cingulo de saetis equorum facto, quo pia Lutgardis ad carnem in macerationem corporis sui uti consueverat, utero superposuit, et cunctis stupentibus sine ulla doloris conditione in salutem sui et suae sobolis liberatur. Hoc idem in diversis locis et in diversis personis efficaciter est probatum.

Finis

¹ RV in ingressu

About the Latin text:

The text is based on *De S. Virgine Lutgarde* edited by Godfrey Henschen and published in *Acta Sanctorum*, Junii Tomus IV, 1867, 187-210. I also consulted a 15th century manuscript of the life that is available online. This version forms part of an anthology titled *Hagiologium Brabantinorum*, which was compiled around 1480 by Jan Gielemans at the Augustinian Monastery of Rooklooster near Brussels. The manuscript is currently in the collection of the Austrian National Library in Vienna (MS 12707, f. 228v-246v). In the notes I refer to the manuscript as RV, for Rubea Vallis, the Latin name of Rooklooster.

I didn't do a detailed comparison of RV and the text in *Acta Sanctorum* (AS). RV was in fact one of the supplementary sources used by Godfrey Henschen in preparing the text for AS. I used RV mainly to corroborate the correction of obvious errors that had crept into Henschen's text. There are, however, two corrupt passages in AS, not easily rectified and very troublesome for the translator, that were amended by variant readings in RV (sect. 1.15 and 2.25).

I also consulted Surius' rendering of the life in humanistic Latin, which is based on what I would consider a more primitive manuscript tradition than that used by Henschen. It was helpful on occasion and is cited a few times in the notes (Laurentius Surius, *De Probatis Sanctorum Historiis*, Tomus III, 1572, 657-676).

In preparing the text I modified the spelling and punctuation in the interests of readability. The paragraph divisions are my own, and match those in my English translation. Direct quotes from the Bible and other written works I placed in italics and indicated the source in the notes.

Mark Reynolds Evergreen Cemetery Fayetteville Arkansas Christmas Day MMXXIV
Last Revision: Easter Sunday MMXXVI